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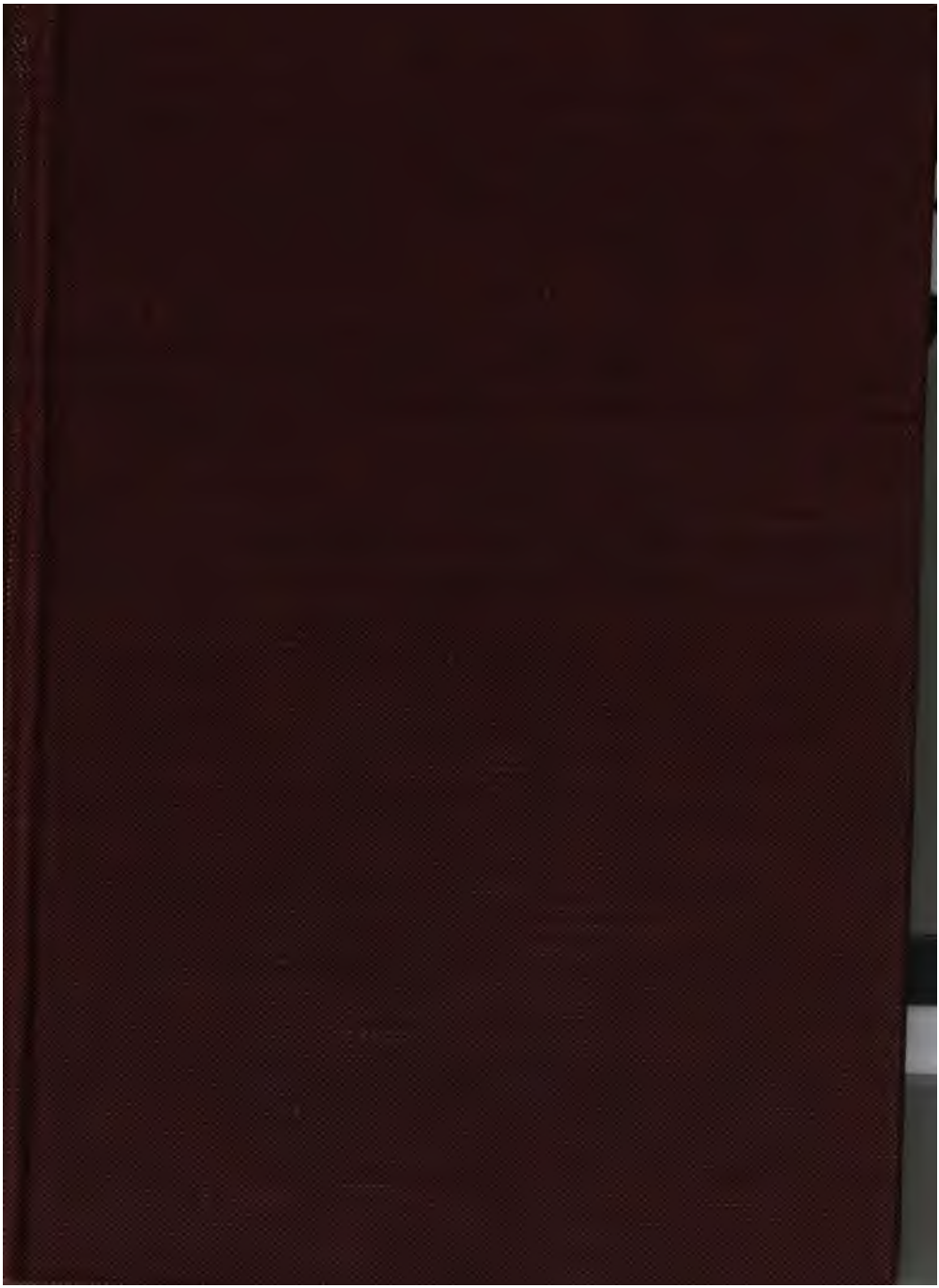

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THE

WIGWAM AND THE CABIN.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"THE YEMASSEE," "GUY RIVERS," &c.

W. G. Simms

"The ancient tales
Which first I learn'd,
Will I relate."

EDDA OF SAEMUND

FIRST SERIES.

NEW YORK:
WILEY AND PUTNAM, 161 BROADWAY.

1845.

C

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AN AFFECTION WHICH HAS STEADILY ADVANCED

WITH MY JUST APPRECIATION OF HIS

INTEGRITY AND GENTLENESS OF CHARACTER,

I DEDICATE THIS VOLUME.

THE AUTHOR.

New York, Oct. 1, 1845.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Tales which follow have been the accumulation of several years. They were mostly written for the annuals, —an expensive form of publication which kept them from the great body of readers. In this form, however, they met with favour, and it is thought that their merits are such as will justify their collection in a compact volume. The material employed will be found to illustrate, in large degree, the border history of the South. I can speak with confidence of the general truthfulness of its treatment. The life of the planter, the squatter, the Indian, and the negro—the bold and hardy pioneer, and the vigorous yeomen—these are the subjects. In their delineation, I have mostly drawn from living portraits, and, in frequent instances, from actual scenes and circumstances within the memories of men. More need not be said. I need not apologize for the endeavour to cast over the actual, that atmosphere from the realms of the ideal, which, while it constitutes the very element of fiction, is neither inconsistent with intellectual truthfulness, nor unfriendly to the great policies of human society.

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THE WIGWAM AND THE CABIN.

GRAYLING; OR, "MURDER WILL OUT."

CHAPTER I.

The world has become monstrous matter-of-fact in latter days. We can no longer get a ghost story, either for love or money. The materialists have it all their own way; and even the little urchin, eight years old, instead of deferring with decent reverence to the opinions of his grandmamma, now stands up stoutly for his own. He believes in every "ology" but pneumatology. "Faust" and the "Old Woman of Berkeley" move his derision only, and he would laugh incredulously, if he dared, at the Witch of Endor. The whole armoury of modern reasoning is on his side; and, however he may admit at seasons that belief can scarcely be counted a matter of will, he yet puts his veto on all sorts of credulity. That cold-blooded demon called Science has taken the place of all the other demons. He has certainly cast out innumerable devils, however he may still spare the principal. Whether we are the better for his intervention is another question. There is reason to apprehend that in disturbing our human faith in shadows, we have lost some of those wholesome moral restraints which might have kept many of us virtuous, where the laws could not.

The effect, however, is much the more seriously evil in all that concerns the romantic. Our story-tellers are so resolute to deal in the real, the actual only, that they venture on no subjects the details of which are not equally vulgar and susceptible of proof. With this end in view, indeed, they too commonly choose their

subjects among convicted felons, in order that they may avail themselves of the evidence which led to their conviction; and, to prove more conclusively their devoted adherence to nature and the truth, they depict the former not only in her condition of nakedness, but long before she has found out the springs of running water. It is to be feared that some of the coarseness of modern taste arises from the too great lack of that veneration which belonged to, and elevated to dignity, even the errors of preceding ages. A love of the marvellous belongs, it appears to me, to all those who love and cultivate either of the fine arts. I very much doubt whether the poet, the painter, the sculptor, or the romancer, ever yet lived, who had not some strong bias—a leaning, at least,—to a belief in the wonders of the invisible world. Certainly, the higher orders of poets and painters, those who create and invent, must have a strong taint of the superstitious in their composition. But this is digressive, and leads us from our purpose.

It is so long since we have been suffered to see or hear of a ghost, that a visitation at this time may have the effect of novelty, and I propose to narrate a story which I heard more than once in my boyhood, from the lips of an aged relative, who succeeded, at the time, in making me believe every word of it; perhaps, for the simple reason that she convinced me she believed every word of it herself. My grandmother was an old lady who had been a resident of the seat of most frequent war in Carolina during the Revolution. She had fortunately survived the numberless atrocities which she was yet compelled to witness; and, a keen observer, with a strong memory, she had in store a thousand legends of that stirring period, which served to beguile me from sleep many and many a long winter night. The story which I propose to tell was one of these; and when I say that she not only devoutly believed it herself, but that it was believed by sundry of her contemporaries, who were themselves privy to such of the circumstances as could be known to third parties, the gravity with which I repeat the legend will not be considered very astonishing.

The revolutionary war had but a little while been concluded. The British had left the country; but peace did not imply repose. The community was still in that state of ferment which was natural enough to passions, not yet at rest, which had been brought

into exercise and action during the protracted seven years' struggle through which the nation had just passed. The state was overrun by idlers, adventurers, profligates, and criminals. Disbanded soldiers, half-starved and reckless, occupied the highways, —outlaws, emerging from their hiding-places, skulked about the settlements with an equal sentiment of hate and fear in their hearts;—patriots were clamouring for justice upon the tories, and sometimes anticipating its course by judgments of their own; while the tories, those against whom the proofs were too strong for denial or evasion, buckled on their armour for a renewal of the struggle. Such being the condition of the country, it may easily be supposed that life and property lacked many of their necessary securities. Men generally travelled with weapons which were displayed on the smallest provocation: and few who could provide themselves with an escort ventured to travel any distance without one.

There was, about this time, said my grandmother, and while such was the condition of the country, a family of the name of Grayling, that lived somewhere upon the skirts of "Ninety-six" district. Old Grayling, the head of the family, was dead. He was killed in Buford's massacre. His wife was a fine woman, not so very old, who had an only son named James, and a little girl, only five years of age, named Lucy. James was but fourteen when his father was killed, and that event made a man of him. He went out with his rifle in company with Joel Sparkman, who was his mother's brother, and joined himself to Pickens's Brigade. Here he made as good a soldier as the best. He had no sort of fear. He was always the first to go forward; and his rifle was always good for his enemy's button at a long hundred yards. He was in several fights both with the British and tories; and just before the war was ended he had a famous brush with the Cherokees, when Pickens took their country from them. But though he had no fear, and never knew when to stop killing while the fight was going on, he was the most bashful of boys that I ever knew; and so kind-hearted that it was almost impossible to believe all we heard of his fierce doings when he was in battle. But they were nevertheless quite true for all his bashfulness.

Well, when the war was over, Joel Sparkman, who lived with

his sister, Grayling, persuaded her that it would be better to move down into the low country. I don't know what reason he had for it, or what they proposed to do there. They had very little property, but Sparkman was a knowing man, who could turn his hand to a hundred things; and as he was a bachelor, and loved his sister and her children just as if they had been his own, it was natural that she should go with him wherever he wished. James, too, who was restless by nature—and the taste he had enjoyed of the wars had made him more so—he was full of it; and so, one sunny morning in April, their wagon started for the city. The wagon was only a small one, with two horses, scarcely larger than those that are employed to carry chickens and fruit to the market from the Wassamaws and thereabouts. It was driven by a negro fellow named Clytus, and carried Mrs. Grayling and Lucy. James and his uncle loved the saddle too well to shut themselves up in such a vehicle; and both of them were mounted on fine horses which they had won from the enemy. The saddle that James rode on,—and he was very proud of it,—was one that he had taken at the battle of Cowpens from one of Tarleton's own dragoons, after he had tumbled the owner. The roads at that season were excessively bad, for the rains of March had been frequent and heavy, the track was very much cut up, and the red clay gullies of the hills of "Ninety-six" were so washed that it required all shoulders, twenty times a day, to get the wagon-wheels out of the bog. This made them travel very slowly,—perhaps, not more than fifteen miles a day. Another cause for slow travelling was, the necessity of great caution, and a constant look-out for enemies both up and down the road. James and his uncle took it by turns to ride a-head, precisely as they did when scouting in war, but one of them always kept along with the wagon. They had gone on this way for two days, and saw nothing to trouble and alarm them. There were few persons on the high-road, and these seemed to the full as shy of them as they probably were of strangers. But just as they were about to camp, the evening of the second day, while they were splitting light-wood, and getting out the kettles and the frying-pan, a person rode up and joined them without much ceremony. He was a short thick-set man, somewhere between forty and fifty: had

on very coarse and common garments, though he rode a fine black horse of remarkable strength and vigour. He was very civil of speech, though he had but little to say, and that little showed him to be a person without much education and with no refinement. He begged permission to make one of the encampment, and his manner was very respectful and even humble; but there was something dark and sullen in his face—his eyes, which were of a light gray colour, were very restless, and his nose turned up sharply, and was very red. His forehead was excessively broad, and his eyebrows thick and shaggy—white hairs being freely mingled with the dark, both in them and upon his head. Mrs. Grayling did not like this man's looks, and whispered her dislike to her son; but James, who felt himself equal to any man, said, promptly—

"What of that, mother! we can't turn the stranger off and say 'no;' and if he means any mischief, there's two of us, you know."

The man had no weapons—none, at least, which were then visible; and deported himself in so humble a manner, that the prejudice which the party had formed against him when he first appeared, if it was not dissipated while he remained, at least failed to gain any increase. He was very quiet, did not mention an unnecessary word, and seldom permitted his eyes to rest upon those of any of the party, the females not excepted. This, perhaps, was the only circumstance, that, in the mind of Mrs. Grayling, tended to confirm the hostile impression which his coming had originally occasioned. In a little while the temporary encampment was put in a state equally social and warlike. The wagon was wheeled a little way into the woods, and off the road; the horses fastened behind it in such a manner that any attempt to steal them would be difficult of success, even were the watch neglectful which was yet to be maintained upon them. Extra guns, concealed in the straw at the bottom of the wagon, were kept well loaded. In the foreground, and between the wagon and the highway, a fire was soon blazing with a wild but cheerful gleam; and the worthy dame, Mrs. Grayling, assisted by the little girl, Lucy, lost no time in setting on the frying-pan, and cutting into slices the haunch of bacon, which they had provided at leaving home. James Grayling patrolled the woods, meanwhile for a

mile or two round the encampment, while his uncle, Joel Sparkman, foot to foot with the stranger, seemed—if the absence of all care constitutes the supreme of human felicity—to realize the most perfect conception of mortal happiness. But Joel was very far from being the careless person that he seemed. Like an old soldier, he simply hung out false colours, and concealed his real timidity by an extra show of confidence and courage. He did not relish the stranger from the first, any more than his sister; and having subjected him to a searching examination, such as was considered, in those days of peril and suspicion, by no means inconsistent with becoming courtesy, he came rapidly to the conclusion that he was no better than he should be.

"You are a Scotchman, stranger," said Joel, suddenly drawing up his feet, and bending forward to the other with an eye like that of a hawk stooping over a covey of partridges. It was a wonder that he had not made the discovery before. The broad dialect of the stranger was not to be subdued; but Joel made slow stages and short progress in his mental journeyings. The answer was given with evident hesitation, but it was affirmative.

"Well, now, it's mighty strange that you should ha' fou't with us and not agin us," responded Joel Sparkman. "There was a precious few of the Scotch, and none that I knows on, saving yourself, perhaps,—that didn't go dead agin us, and for the tories, through thick and thin. That 'Cross Creek settlement' was a mighty ugly thorn in the sides of us whigs. It turned out a raal bad stock of varmints. I hope,—I reckon, stranger,—you aint from that part."

"No," said the other; "oh no! I'm from over the other quarter. I'm from the Duncan settlement above."

"I've hearn tell of that other settlement, but I never know'd as any of the men fou't with us. What gineral did you fight under? What Carolina gineral?"

"I was at Gum Swamp when General Gates was defeated;" was the still hesitating reply of the other.

"Well, I thank God, *I* warn't there, though I reckon things wouldn't ha' turned out quite so bad, if there had been a leetle sprinkling of Sumter's, or Pickens's, or Marion's men, among them two-legged critters that run that day. They did tell that some of

the regiments went off without ever once emptying their rifles. Now, stranger, I hope you warn't among them fellows."

"I was not," said the other with something more of promptness.

"I don't blame a chap for dodging a bullet if he can, or being too quick for a bagnet, because, I'm thinking, a live man is always a better man than a dead one, or he can become so; but to run without taking a single crack at the inimy, is downright cowardice. There's no two ways about it, stranger."

This opinion, delivered with considerable emphasis, met with the ready assent of the Scotchman, but Joel Sparkman was not to be diverted, even by his own eloquence, from the object of his inquiry.

"But you ain't said," he continued, "who was your Carolina gineral. Gates was from Virginny, and he stayed a mighty short time when he come. You didn't run far at Camden, I reckon, and you joined the army ag'in, and come in with Greene? Was that the how?"

To this the stranger assented, though with evident disinclination.

"Then, mou'tbe, we sometimes went into the same scratch together? I was at Cowpens and Ninety-Six, and seen sarvice at other odds and eends, where there was more fighting than fun. I reckon you must have been at 'Ninety-Six,'—perhaps at Cowpens, too, if you went with Morgan?"

The unwillingness of the stranger to respond to these questions appeared to increase. He admitted, however, that he had been at "Ninety-Six," though, as Sparkman afterwards remembered, in this case, as in that of the defeat of Gates at Gum Swamp, he had not said on which side he had fought. Joel, as he discovered the reluctance of his guest to answer his questions, and perceived his growing doggedness, forbore to annoy him, but mentally resolved to keep a sharper look-out than ever upon his motions. His examination concluded with an inquiry, which, in the plain-dealing regions of the south and south-west, is not unfrequently put first.

"And what mout be your name, stranger?"

"Macnab," was the ready response, "Sandy Macnab."

"Well, Mr. Macnab, I see that my sister's got supper ready

for us; so we mou't as well fall to upon the hoecake and bacon."

Sparkman rose while speaking, and led the way to the spot, near the wagon, where Mrs. Grayling had spread the feast. "We're pretty nigh on to the main road, here, but I reckon there's no great danger now. Besides, Jim Grayling keeps watch for us, and he's got two as good eyes in his head as any scout in the country, and a rifle that, after you once know how it shoots, 'twould do your heart good to hear its crack, if so be that twa'n't your heart that he drawed sight on. He's a perdigious fine shot, and as ready to shoot and fight as if he had a nateral calling that way."

"Shall we wait for him before we eat?" demanded Macnab, anxiously.

"By no sort o' reason, stranger," answered Sparkman. "He'll watch for us while we're eating, and after that I'll change shoes with him. So fall to, and don't mind what's a coming."

Sparkman had just broken the hoecake, when a distant whistle was heard.

"Ha! That's the lad now!" he exclaimed, rising to his feet. "He's on trail. He's got a sight of an inimy's fire, I reckon. 'Twon't be onreasonable, friend Macnab, to get our we'pons in readiness;" and, so speaking, Sparkman bid his sister get into the wagon, where the little Lucy had already placed herself, while he threw open the pan of his rifle, and turned the priming over with his finger. Macnab, meanwhile, had taken from his holsters, which he had before been sitting upon, a pair of horseman's pistols, richly mounted with figures in silver. These were large and long, and had evidently seen service. Unlike his companion, his proceedings occasioned no comment. What he did seemed a matter of habit, of which he himself was scarcely conscious. Having looked at his priming, he laid the instruments beside him without a word, and resumed the bit of hoecake which he had just before received from Sparkman. Meanwhile, the signal whistle, supposed to come from James Grayling, was repeated. Silence ensued then for a brief space, which Sparkman employed in perambulating the grounds immediately contiguous. At length, just as he had returned to the fire, the sound of a horse's feet was heard, and a sharp quick halloo from Grayling informed his

uncle that all was right. The youth made his appearance a moment after accompanied by a stranger on horseback; a tall, fine-looking young man, with a keen flashing eye, and a voice whose lively clear tones, as he was heard approaching, sounded cheerily like those of a trumpet after victory. James Grayling kept along on foot beside the new-comer; and his hearty laugh, and free, glib, garrulous tones, betrayed to his uncle, long ere he drew nigh enough to declare the fact, that he had met unexpectedly with a friend, or, at least, an old acquaintance.

"Why, who have you got there, James?" was the demand of Sparkman, as he dropped the butt of his rifle upon the ground.

"Why, who do you think, uncle? Who but Major Spencer—our own major?"

"You don't say so!—what!—well! Li'nel Spencer, for sartin! Lord bless you, major, who'd ha' thought to see you in these parts; and jest mounted too, for all natur, as if the war was to be fou't over ag'in. Well, I'm raal glad to see you. I am, that's sartin!"

"And I'm very glad to see you, Sparkman," said the other, as he alighted from his steed, and yielded his hand to the cordial grasp of the other.

"Well, I knows that, major, without you saying it. But you've jest come in the right time. The bacon's frying, and here's the bread;—let's down upon our haunches, in right good airnest, camp fashion; and make the most of what God gives us in the way of blessings. I reckon you don't mean to ride any further to-night, major?"

"No," said the person addressed, "not if you'll let me lay my heels at your fire. But who's in your wagon? My old friend, Mrs. Grayling, I suppose?"

"That's a true word, major," said the lady herself, making her way out of the vehicle with good-humoured agility, and coming forward with extended hand.

"Really, Mrs. Grayling, I'm very glad to see you." And the stranger, with the blandness of a gentleman and the hearty warmth of an old neighbour, expressed his satisfaction at once more finding himself in the company of an old acquaintance. Their greetings once over, Major Spencer readily joined the

group about the fire, while James Grayling—though with some reluctance—disappeared to resume his toils of the scout while the supper proceeded.

"And who have you here?" demanded Spencer, as his eye rested on the dark, hard features of the Scotchman. Sparkman told him all that he himself had learned of the name and character of the stranger, in a brief whisper, and in a moment after formally introduced the parties in this fashion—

"Mr. Macnab, Major Spencer. Mr. Macnab says he's true blue, major, and fou't at Camden, when General Gates run so hard to 'bring the d—d militia back.' He also fou't at Ninety-Six, and Cowpens—so I reckon we had as good as count him one of us."

Major Spencer scrutinized the Scotchman keenly—a scrutiny which the latter seemed very ill to relish. He put a few questions to him on the subject of the war, and some of the actions in which he allowed himself to have been concerned; but his evident reluctance to unfold himself—a reluctance so unnatural to the brave soldier who has gone through his toils honourably—had the natural effect of discouraging the young officer, whose sense of delicacy had not been materially impaired amid the rude jostlings of military life. But, though he forbore to propose any other questions to Macnab, his eyes continued to survey the features of his sullen countenance with curiosity and a strangely increasing interest. This he subsequently explained to Sparkman, when, at the close of supper, James Grayling came in, and the former assumed the duties of the scout.

"I have seen that Scotchman's face somewhere, Sparkman, and I'm convinced at some interesting moment; but where, when, or how, I cannot call to mind. The sight of it is even associated in my mind with something painful and unpleasant; where could I have seen him?"

"I don't somehow like his looks myself," said Sparkman, "and I mislists he's been rether more of a tory than a whig; but that's nothing to the purpose now; and he's at our fire, and we've broken hoecake together; so we cannot rake up the old ashes to make a dust with."

"No, surely not," was the reply of Spencer. "Even though

we knew him to be a tory, that cause of former quarrel should occasion none now. But it should produce watchfulness and caution. I'm glad to see that you have not forgot your old business of scouting in the swamp."

"Kin I forget it, major?" demanded Sparkman, in tones which, though whispered, were full of emphasis, as he laid his ear to the earth to listen.

"James has finished supper, major—that's his whistle to tell me so; and I'll jest step back to make it cl'ar to him how we're to keep up the watch to-night."

"Count me in your arrangements, Sparkman, as I am one of you for the night," said the major.

"By no sort of means," was the reply. "The night must be shared between James and myself. Ef so be you wants to keep company with one or t'other of us, why, that's another thing, and, of course, you can do as you please."

"We'll have no quarrel on the subject, Joel," said the officer, good-naturedly, as they returned to the camp together.

CHAPTER II.

The arrangements of the party were soon made. Spencer renewed his offer at the fire to take his part in the watch; and the Scotchman, Macnab, volunteered his services also; but the offer of the latter was another reason why that of the former should be declined. Sparkman was resolute to have everything his own way; and while James Grayling went out upon his lonely rounds, he busied himself in cutting bushes and making a sort of tent for the use of his late commander. Mrs. Grayling and Lucy slept in a wagon. The Scotchman stretched himself with little effort before the fire; while Joel Sparkman, wrapping himself up in his cloak, crouched under the wagon body, with his back resting partly against one of the wheels. From time to time he rose and thrust additional brands into the fire, looked up at the night, and round upon the little encampment, then sunk back to his perch and stole a few moments, at intervals, of uneasy sleep. The first two hours of the watch were over, and James Grayling was relieved. The youth, however, felt in no mood for sleep, and taking his seat by the fire, he drew from his pocket a little volume of Easy Reading Lessons, and by the fitful flame of the resinous light-wood, he prepared, in this rude manner, to make up for the precious time which his youth had lost of its legitimate employments, in the stirring events of the preceding seven years consumed in war. He was surprised at this employment by his late commander, who, himself sleepless, now emerged from the bushes and joined Grayling at the fire. The youth had been rather a favourite with Spencer. They had both been reared in the same neighbourhood, and the first military achievements of James had taken place under the eye, and had met the approbation of his officer. The difference of their ages was just such as to permit of the warm attachment of the lad without diminishing any of the reverence which should be felt by the inferior. Grayling was not more than seventeen, and Spencer was perhaps thirty-

four—the very prime of manhood. They sat by the fire and talked of old times and told old stories with the hearty glee and good-nature of the young. Their mutual inquiries led to the revelation of their several objects in pursuing the present journey. Those of James Grayling were scarcely, indeed, to be considered his own. They were plans and purposes of his uncle, and it does not concern this narrative that we should know more of their nature than has already been revealed. But, whatever they were, they were as freely unfolded to his hearer as if the parties had been brothers, and Spencer was quite as frank in his revelations as his companion. He, too, was on his way to Charleston, from whence he was to take passage for England.

"I am rather in a hurry to reach town," he said, "as I learn that the Falmouth packet is preparing to sail for England in a few days, and I must go in her.'

"For England, major!" exclaimed the youth with unaffected astonishment.

"Yes, James, for England. But why—what astonishes you?"

"Why, lord!" exclaimed the simple youth, "if they only knew there, as I do, what a cutting and slashing you did use to make among their red coats, I reckon they'd hang you to the first hickory."

"Oh, no! scarcely," said the other, with a smile.

"But I reckon you'll change your name, major?" continued the youth.

"No," responded Spencer, "if I did that, I should lose the object of my voyage. You must know, James, that an old relative has left me a good deal of money in England, and I can only get it by proving that I am Lionel Spencer; so you see I must carry my own name, whatever may be the risk."

"Well, major, you know best; but I do think if they could only have a guess of what you did among their sodgers at Hobkirk's and Cowpens, and Eutaw, and a dozen other places, they'd find some means of hanging you up, peace or no peace. But I don't see what occasion you have to be going cl'ar away to England for money, when you've got a sight of your own already."

"Not so much as you think for," replied the major, giving an involuntary and uneasy glance at the Scotchman, who was seem-

ingly sound asleep on the opposite side of the fire. "There is, you know, but little money in the country at any time, and I must get what I want for my expenses when I reach Charleston. I have just enough to carry me there."

"Well, now, major, that's mighty strange. I always thought that you was about the best off of any man in our parts; but if you're strained so close, I'm thinking, major,—if so be you wouldn't think me too presumptuous,—you'd better let me lend you a guinea or so that I've got to spare, and you can pay me back when you get the English money."

And the youth fumbled in his bosom for a little cotton wallet, which, with its limited contents, was displayed in another instant to the eyes of the officer.

"No, no, James," said the other, putting back the generous tribute; "I have quite enough to carry me to Charleston, and when there I can easily get a supply from the merchants. But I thank you, my good fellow, for your offer. You *are* a good fellow, James, and I will remember you."

It is needless to pursue the conversation farther. The night passed away without any alarms, and at dawn of the next day the whole party was engaged in making preparation for a start. Mrs. Grayling was soon busy in getting breakfast in readiness. Major Spencer consented to remain with them until it was over; but the Scotchman, after returning thanks very civilly for his accommodation of the night, at once resumed his journey. His course seemed, like their own, to lie below; but he neither declared his route nor betrayed the least desire to know that of Spencer. The latter had no disposition to renew those inquiries from which the stranger seemed to shrink the night before, and he accordingly suffered him to depart with a quiet farewell, and the utterance of a good-natured wish, in which all the parties joined, that he might have a pleasant journey. When he was fairly out of sight, Spencer said to Sparkman,

"Had I liked that fellow's looks, nay, had I not positively disliked them, I should have gone with him. As it is, I will remain and share your breakfast."

The repast being over, all parties set forward; but Spencer, after keeping along with them for a mile, took his leave also.

The slow wagon-pace at which the family travelled, did not suit the high-spirited cavalier; and it was necessary, as he assured them, that he should reach the city in two nights more. They parted with many regrets, as truly felt as they were warmly expressed; and James Grayling never felt the tedium of wagon travelling to be so severe as throughout the whole of that day when he separated from his favourite captain. But he was too stout-hearted a lad to make any complaint; and his dissatisfaction only showed itself in his unwonted silence, and an over-anxiety, which his steed seemed to feel in common with himself, to go rapidly ahead. Thus the day passed, and the wayfarers at its close had made a progress of some twenty miles from sun to sun. The same precautions marked their encampment this night as the last, and they rose in better spirits with the next morning, the dawn of which was very bright and pleasant, and encouraging. A similar journey of twenty miles brought them to the place of bivouac as the sun went down; and they prepared as usual for their securities and supper. They found themselves on the edge of a very dense forest of pines and scrubby oaks, a portion of which was swallowed up in a deep bay—so called in the dialect of the country—a swamp-bottom, the growth of which consisted of mingled cypresses and bay-trees, with tupola, gum, and dense thickets of low stunted shrubbery, cane grass, and dwarf willows, which filled up every interval between the trees, and to the eye most effectually barred out every human intruder. This bay was chosen as the background for the camping party. Their wagon was wheeled into an area on a gently rising ground in front, under a pleasant shade of oaks and hickories, with a lonely pine rising loftily in occasional spots among them. Here the horses were taken out, and James Grayling prepared to kindle up a fire; but, looking for his axe, it was unaccountably missing, and after a fruitless search of half an hour, the party came to the conclusion that it had been left on the spot where they had slept last night. This was a disaster, and, while they meditated in what manner to repair it, a negro boy appeared in sight, passing along the road at their feet, and driving before him a small herd of cattle. From him they learned that they were only a mile or two from a farmstead where an axe might be borrowed;

and James, leaping on his horse, rode forward in the hope to obtain one. He found no difficulty in his quest; and, having obtained it from the farmer, who was also a tavern-keeper, he casually asked if Major Spencer had not stayed with him the night before. He was somewhat surprised when told that he had not.

"There was one man stayed with me last night," said the farmer, "but he didn't call himself a major, and didn't much look like one."

"He rode a fine sorrel horse,—tall, bright colour, with white fore foot, didn't he?" asked James.

"No, that he didn't! He rode a powerful black, coal black, and not a bit of white about him."

"That was the Scotchman! But I wonder the major didn't stop with you. He must have rode on. Isn't there another house near you, below?"

"Not one. There's ne'er a house either above or below for a matter of fifteen miles. I'm the only man in all that distance that's living on this road; and I don't think your friend could have gone below, as I should have seen him pass. I've been all day out there in that field before your eyes, clearing up the brush."

CHAPTER III.

SOMEWHAT wondering that the major should have turned aside from the track, though without attaching to it any importance at that particular moment, James Grayling took up the borrowed axe and hurried back to the encampment, where the toil of cutting an extra supply of light-wood to meet the exigencies of the ensuing night, sufficiently exercised his mind as well as his body, to prevent him from meditating upon the seeming strangeness of the circumstance. But when he sat down to his supper over the fire that he had kindled, his fancies crowded thickly upon him, and he felt a confused doubt and suspicion that something was to happen, he knew not what. His conjectures and apprehensions were without form, though not altogether void; and he felt a strange sickness and a sinking at the heart which was very unusual with him. He had, in short, that lowness of spirits, that cloudy apprehensiveness of soul which takes the form of presentiment, and makes us look out for danger even when the skies are without a cloud, and the breeze is laden, equally and only, with balm and music. His moodiness found no sympathy among his companions. Joel Sparkman was in the best of humours, and his mother was so cheery and happy, that when the thoughtful boy went off into the woods to watch, he could hear her at every moment breaking out into little catches of a country ditty, which the gloomy events of the late war had not yet obliterated from her memory.

"It's very strange!" soliloquized the youth, as he wandered along the edges of the dense bay or swamp-bottom, which we have passingly referred to,—"it's very strange what troubles me so! I feel almost frightened, and yet I know I'm not to be frightened easily, and I don't see anything in the woods to frighten me. It's strange the major didn't come along this road! Maybe he took another higher up that leads by a different settlement. I wish I had asked the man at the house if there's such another

road. I reckon there must be, however, for where could the major have gone?"

The unphilosophical mind of James Grayling did not, in his farther meditations, carry him much beyond this starting point; and with its continual recurrence in soliloquy, he proceeded to traverse the margin of the bay, until he came to its junction with, and termination at, the high-road. The youth turned into this, and, involuntarily departing from it a moment after, soon found himself on the opposite side of the bay thicket. He wandered on and on, as he himself described it, without any power to restrain himself. He knew not how far he went; but, instead of maintaining his watch for two hours only, he was gone more than four; and, at length, a sense of weariness which overpowered him all of a sudden, caused him to seat himself at the foot of a tree, and snatch a few moments of rest. He denied that he slept in this time. He insisted to the last moment of his life that sleep never visited his eyelids that night,—that he was conscious of fatigue and exhaustion, but not drowsiness,—and that this fatigue was so numbing as to be painful, and effectually kept him from any sleep. While he sat thus beneath the tree, with a body weak and nerveless, but a mind excited, he knew not how or why, to the most acute degree of expectation and attention, he heard his name called by the well-known voice of his friend, Major Spencer. The voice called him three times,—"James Grayling!—James!—James Grayling!" before he could muster strength enough to answer. It was not courage he wanted,—of that he was positive, for he felt sure, as he said, that something had gone wrong, and he was never more ready to fight in his life than at that moment, could he have commanded the physical capacity; but his throat seemed dry to suffocation,—his lips effectually sealed up as if with wax, and when he did answer, the sounds seemed as fine and soft as the whisper of some child just born.

"Oh! major, is it you?"

Such, he thinks, were the very words he made use of in reply; and the answer that he received was instantaneous, though the voice came from some little distance in the bay, and his own voice he did not hear. He only knows what he meant to say. The answer was to this effect.

"It is, James!—It is your own friend, Lionel Spencer, that speaks to you; do not be alarmed when you see me! I have been shockingly murdered!"

James asserts that he tried to tell him that he would not be frightened, but his own voice was still a whisper, which he himself could scarcely hear. A moment after he had spoken, he heard something like a sudden breeze that rustled through the bay bushes at his feet, and his eyes were closed without his effort, and indeed in spite of himself. When he opened them, he saw Major Spencer standing at the edge of the bay, about twenty steps from him. Though he stood in the shade of a thicket, and there was no light in the heavens save that of the stars, he was yet enabled to distinguish perfectly, and with great ease, every lineament of his friend's face.

He looked very pale, and his garments were covered with blood; and James said that he strove very much to rise from the place where he sat and approach him;—"for, in truth," said the lad, "so far from feeling any fear, I felt nothing but fury in my heart; but I could not move a limb. My feet were fastened to the ground; my hands to my sides; and I could only bend forward and gasp. I felt as if I should have died with vexation that I could not rise; but a power which I could not resist, made me motionless, and almost speechless. I could only say, 'Murdered!'—and that one word I believe I must have repeated a dozen times.

"'Yes, murdered!—murdered by the Scotchman who slept with us at your fire the night before last. James, I look to you to have the murderer brought to justice! James!—do you hear me, James?'

"These," said James, "I think were the very words, or near about the very words, that I heard; and I tried to ask the major to tell me how it was, and how I could do what he required; but I didn't hear myself speak, though it would appear that he did, for almost immediately after I had tried to speak what I wished to say, he answered me just as if I had said it. He told me that the Scotchman had waylaid, killed, and hidden him in that very bay; that his murderer had gone to Charleston; and that if I made haste to town, I would find him in the Falmouth packet,

which was then lying in the harbour and ready to sail for England. He farther said that everything depended on my making haste,—that I must reach town by to-morrow night if I wanted to be in season, and go right on board the vessel and charge the criminal with the deed. 'Do not be afraid,' said he, when he had finished; 'be afraid of nothing, James, for God will help and strengthen you to the end.' When I heard all I burst into a flood of tears, and then I felt strong. I felt that I could talk, or fight, or do almost anything; and I jumped up to my feet, and was just about to run down to where the major stood, but, with the first step which I made forward, he was gone. I stopped and looked all around me, but I could see nothing; and the bay was just as black as midnight. But I went down to it, and tried to press in where I thought the major had been standing; but I couldn't get far, the brush and bay bushes were so close and thick. I was now bold and strong enough, and I called out, loud enough to be heard half a mile. I didn't exactly know what I called for, or what I wanted to learn, or I have forgotten. But I heard nothing more. Then I remembered the camp, and began to fear that something might have happened to mother and uncle, for I now felt, what I had not thought of before, that I had gone too far round the bay to be of much assistance, or, indeed, to be in time for any, had they been suddenly attacked. Besides, I could not think how long I had been gone; but it now seemed very late. The stars were shining their brightest, and the thin white clouds of morning were beginning to rise and run towards the west. Well, I bethought me of my course,—for I was a little bewildered and doubtful where I was; but, after a little thinking, I took the back track, and soon got a glimpse of the camp-fire, which was nearly burnt down; and by this I reckoned I was gone considerably longer than my two hours. When I got back into the camp, I looked under the wagon, and found uncle in a sweet sleep, and though my heart was full almost to bursting with what I had heard, and the cruel sight I had seen, yet I wouldn't waken him; and I beat about and mended the fire, and watched, and waited, until near daylight, when mother called to me out of the wagon, and asked who it was. This wakened my uncle, and then I up and told all that had happened, for if it had been to

save my life, I couldn't have kept it in much longer. But though mother said it was very strange, Uncle Sparkman considered that I had been only dreaming; but he couldn't persuade me of it; and when I told him I intended to be off at daylight, just as the major had told me to do, and ride my best all the way to Charleston, he laughed, and said I was a fool. But I felt that I was no fool, and I was solemn certain that I hadn't been dreaming; and though both mother and he tried their hardest to make me put off going, yet I made up my mind to it, and they had to give up. For, wouldn't I have been a pretty sort of a friend to the major, if, after what he told me, I could have stayed behind, and gone on only at a wagon-pace to look after the murderer! I dont think if I had done so that I should ever have been able to look a white man in the face again. Soon as the peep of day, I was on horseback. Mother was mighty sad, and begged me not to go, but Uncle Sparkman was mighty sulky, and kept calling me fool upon fool, until I was almost angry enough to forget that we were of blood kin. But all his talking did not stop me, and I reckon I was five miles on my way before he had his team in traces for a start. I rode as briskly as I could get on without hurting my nag. I had a smart ride of more than forty miles before me, and the road was very heavy. But it was a good two hours from sunset when I got into town, and the first question I asked of the people I met was, to show me where the ships were kept. When I got to the wharf they showed me the Falmouth packet, where she lay in the stream, ready to sail as soon as the wind should favour."

CHAPTER IV.

James Grayling, with the same eager impatience which he has been suffered to describe in his own language, had already hired a boat to go on board the British packet, when he remembered that he had neglected all those means, legal and otherwise, by which alone his purpose might be properly effected. He did not know much about legal process, but he had common sense enough, the moment that he began to reflect on the subject, to know that some such process was necessary. This conviction produced another difficulty; he knew not in which quarter to turn for counsel and assistance; but here the boatman who saw his bewilderment, and knew by his dialect and dress that he was a back-countryman, came to his relief, and from him he got directions where to find the merchants with whom his uncle, Sparkman, had done business in former years. To them he went, and without circumlocution, told the whole story of his ghostly visitation. Even as a dream, which these gentlemen at once conjectured it to be, the story of James Grayling was equally clear and curious; and his intense warmth and the entire absorption, which the subject had effected, of his mind and soul, was such that they judged it not improper, at least to carry out the search of the vessel which he contemplated. It would certainly, they thought, be a curious coincidence—believing James to be a veracious youth—if the Scotchman should be found on board. But another test of his narrative was proposed by one of the firm. It so happened that the business agents of Major Spencer, who was well known in Charleston, kept their office but a few rods distant from their own; and to them all parties at once proceeded. But here the story of James was encountered by a circumstance that made somewhat against it. These gentlemen produced a letter from Major Spencer, intimating the utter impossibility of his coming to town for the space of a month, and expressing his regret that he should be unable to avail himself of the opportunity of the foreign vessel, of whose ar-

rival in Charleston, and proposed time of departure, they had themselves advised him. They read the letter aloud to James and their brother merchants, and with difficulty suppressed their smiles at the gravity with which the former related and insisted upon the particulars of his vision.

"He has changed his mind," returned the impetuous youth; "he was on his way down, I tell you,—a hundred miles on his way,—when he camped with us. I know him well, I tell you, and talked with him myself half the night."

"At least," remarked the gentlemen who had gone with James, "it can do no harm to look into the business. We can procure a warrant for searching the vessel after this man, Macnab; and should he be found on board the packet, it will be a sufficient circumstance to justify the magistrates in detaining him, until we can ascertain where Major Spencer really is."

The measure was accordingly adopted, and it was nearly sunset before the warrant was procured, and the proper officer in readiness. The impatience of a spirit so eager and so devoted as James Grayling, under these delays, may be imagined; and when in the boat, and on his way to the packet where the criminal was to be sought, his blood became so excited that it was with much ado he could be kept in his seat. His quick, eager action continually disturbed the trim of the boat, and one of his mercantile friends, who had accompanied him, with that interest in the affair which curiosity alone inspired, was under constant apprehension lest he would plunge overboard in his impatient desire to shorten the space which lay between. The same impatience enabled the youth, though never on shipboard before, to grasp the rope which had been flung at their approach, and to mount her sides with catlike agility. Without waiting to declare himself or his purpose, he ran from one side of the deck to the other, greedily staring, to the surprise of officers, passengers, and seamen, in the faces of all of them, and surveying them with an almost offensive scrutiny. He turned away from the search with disappointment. There was no face like that of the suspected man among them. By this time, his friend, the merchant, with the sheriff's officer, had entered the vessel, and were in conference with the captain. Grayling drew nigh in time to hear the latter affirm that there

was no man of the name of Macnab, as stated in the warrant, among his passengers or crew.

"He is—he must be!" exclaimed the impetuous youth. "The major never lied in his life, and couldn't lie after he was dead. Macnab is here—he is a Scotchman—"

The captain interrupted him—

"We have, young gentleman, several Scotchmen on board, and one of them is named Macleod—"

"Let me see him—which is he?" demanded the youth.

By this time, the passengers and a goodly portion of the crew were collected about the little party. The captain turned his eyes upon the group, and asked,

"Where is Mr. Macleod?"

"He is gone below—he's sick!" replied one of the passengers.

"That's he! That must be the man!" exclaimed the youth. "I'll lay my life that's no other than Macnab. He's only taken a false name."

It was now remembered by one of the passengers, and remarked, that Macleod had expressed himself as unwell, but a few moments before, and had gone below even while the boat was rapidly approaching the vessel. At this statement, the captain led the way into the cabin, closely followed by James Grayling and the rest.

"Mr. Macleod," he said with a voice somewhat elevated, as he approached the berth of that person, "you are wanted on deck for a few moments."

"I am really too unwell, captain," replied a feeble voice from behind the curtain of the berth.

"It will be necessary," was the reply of the captain. "There is a warrant from the authorities of the town, to look after a fugitive from justice."

Macleod had already begun a second speech declaring his feebleness, when the fearless youth, Grayling, bounded before the captain and tore away, with a single grasp of his hand, the curtain which concealed the suspected man from their sight.

"It is he!" was the instant exclamation of the youth, as he beheld him. "It is he—Macnab, the Scotchman—the man that murdered Major Spencer!"

Macnab,—for it was he,—was deadly pale. He trembled like

an aspen. His eyes were dilated with more than mortal apprehension, and his lips were perfectly livid. Still, he found strength to speak, and to deny the accusation. He knew nothing of the youth before him—nothing of Major Spencer—his name was Macleod, and he had never called himself by any other. He denied, but with great incoherence, everything which was urged against him.

"You must get up, Mr. Macleod," said the captain; "the circumstances are very much against you. You must go with the officer!"

"Will you give me up to my enemies?" demanded the culprit. "You are a countryman—a Briton. I have fought for the king, our master, against these rebels, and for this they seek my life. Do not deliver me into their bloody hands!"

"Liar!" exclaimed James Grayling—"Didn't you tell us at our own camp-fire that you were with us? that you were at Gates's defeat, and Ninety-Six?"

"But I didn't tell you," said the Scotchman, with a grin, "which side I was on!"

"Ha! remember that!" said the sheriff's officer. "He denied, just a moment ago, that he knew this young man at all; now, he confesses that he did see and camp with him."

The Scotchman was aghast at the strong point which, in his inadvertence, he had made against himself; and his efforts to excuse himself, stammering and contradictory, served only to involve him more deeply in the meshes of his difficulty. Still he continued his urgent appeals to the captain of the vessel, and his fellow-passengers, as citizens of the same country, subjects to the same monarch, to protect him from those who equally hated and would destroy them all. In order to move their national prejudices in his behalf, he boasted of the immense injury which he had done, as a tory, to the rebel cause; and still insisted that the murder was only a pretext of the youth before him, by which to gain possession of his person, and wreak upon him the revenge which his own fierce performances during the war had naturally enough provoked. One or two of the passengers, indeed, joined with him in entreating the captain to set the accusers adrift and make sail at once; but the stout Englishman who was in com-

mand, rejected instantly the unworthy counsel. Besides, he was better aware of the dangers which would follow any such rash proceeding. Fort Moultrie, on Sullivan's Island, had been already refitted and prepared for an enemy; and he was lying, at that moment, under the formidable range of grinning teeth, which would have opened upon him, at the first movement, from the jaws of Castle Pinckney.

"No, gentlemen," said he, "you mistake your man. God forbid that I should give shelter to a murderer, though he were from my own parish."

"But I am no murderer," said the Scotchman.

"You look cursedly like one, however," was the reply of the captain. "Sheriff, take your prisoner."

The base creature threw himself at the feet of the Englishman, and clung, with piteous entreaties, to his knees. The latter shook him off, and turned away in disgust.

"Steward," he cried, "bring up this man's luggage."

He was obeyed. The luggage was brought up from the cabin and delivered to the sheriff's officer, by whom it was examined in the presence of all, and an inventory made of its contents. It consisted of a small new trunk, which, it afterwards appeared, he had bought in Charleston, soon after his arrival. This contained a few changes of raiment, twenty-six guineas in money, a gold watch, not in repair, and the two pistols which he had shown while at Joel Sparkman's camp fire; but, with this difference, that the stock of one was broken off short just above the grasp, and the butt was entirely gone. It was not found among his chattels. A careful examination of the articles in his trunk did not result in anything calculated to strengthen the charge of his criminality; but there was not a single person present who did not feel as morally certain of his guilt as if the jury had already declared the fact. That night he slept—if he slept at all—in the common jail of the city.

CHAPTER V.

His accuser, the warm-hearted and resolute James Grayling, did not sleep. The excitement, arising from mingling and contradictory emotions,—sorrow for his brave young commander's fate, and the natural exultation of a generous spirit at the consciousness of having performed, with signal success, an arduous and painful task combined to drive all pleasant slumbers from his eyes; and with the dawn he was again up and stirring, with his mind still full of the awful business in which he had been engaged. We do not care to pursue his course in the ordinary walks of the city, nor account for his employments during the few days which ensued, until, in consequence of a legal examination into the circumstances which anticipated the regular work of the sessions, the extreme excitement of the young accuser had been renewed. Macnab or Macleod,—and it is possible that both names were fictitious,—as soon as he recovered from his first terrors, sought the aid of an attorney—one of those acute, small, chopping lawyers, to be found in almost every community, who are willing to serve with equal zeal the sinner and the saint, provided that they can pay with equal liberality. The prisoner was brought before the court under *habeas corpus*, and several grounds submitted by his counsel with the view to obtaining his discharge. It became necessary to ascertain, among the first duties of the state, whether Major Spencer, the alleged victim, was really dead. Until it could be established that a man should be imprisoned, tried, and punished for a crime, it was first necessary to show that a crime had been committed, and the attorney made himself exceedingly merry with the ghost story of young Grayling. In those days, however, the ancient Superstition was not so feeble as she has subsequently become. The venerable judge was one of those good men who had a decent respect for the faith and opinions of his ancestors; and though he certainly would not have consented to the hanging of Macleod under the sort of testi-

mony which had been adduced, he yet saw enough, in all the circumstances, to justify his present detention. In the meantime, efforts were to be made, to ascertain the whereabouts of Major Spencer; though, were he even missing,—so the counsel for Macleod contended,—his death could be by no means assumed in consequence. To this the judge shook his head doubtfully. "'Fore God!" said he, "I would not have you to be too sure of that." He was an Irishman, and proceeded after the fashion of his country. The reader will therefore *bear* with his *bull*. "A man may properly be hung for murdering another, though the murdered man be not dead; ay, before God, even though he be actually unhurt and uninjured, while the murderer is swinging by the neck for the bloody deed!"

The judge,—who it must be understood was a real existence, and who had no small reputation in his day in the south,—proceeded to establish the correctness of his opinions by authorities and argument, with all of which, doubtlessly, the bar were exceedingly delighted; but, to provide them in this place would only be to interfere with our own progress. James Grayling, however, was not satisfied to wait the slow processes which were suggested for coming at the truth. Even the wisdom of the judge was lost upon him, possibly, for the simple reason that he did not comprehend it. But the ridicule of the culprit's lawyer stung him to the quick, and he muttered to himself, more than once, a determination "to lick the life out of that impudent chap's leather." But this was not his only resolve. There was one which he proceeded to put into instant execution, and that was to seek the body of his murdered friend in the spot where he fancied it might be found—namely, the dark and dismal bay where the spectre had made its appearance to his eyes.

The suggestion was approved—though he did not need this to prompt his resolution—by his mother and uncle, Sparkman. The latter determined to be his companion, and he was farther accompanied by the sheriff's officer who had arrested the suspected felon. Before daylight, on the morning after the examination before the judge had taken place, and when Macleod had been remanded to prison, James Grayling started on his journey. His fiery zeal received additional force at every added moment of delay, and

his eager spurring brought him at an early hour after noon, to the neighbourhood of the spot through which his search was to be made. When his companions and himself drew nigh, they were all at a loss in which direction first to proceed. The bay was one of those massed forests, whose wall of thorns, vines, and close tenacious shrubs, seemed to defy invasion. To the eye of the townsman it was so forbidding that he pronounced it absolutely impenetrable. But James was not to be baffled. He led them round it, taking the very course which he had pursued the night when the revelation was made him; he showed them the very tree at whose foot he had sunk when the supernatural torpor—as he himself esteemed it—began to fall upon him; he then pointed out the spot, some twenty steps distant, at which the spectre made his appearance. To this spot they then proceeded in a body, and essayed an entrance, but were so discouraged by the difficulties at the outset that all, James not excepted, concluded that neither the murderer nor his victim could possibly have found entrance there.

But, lo! a marvel! Such it seemed, at the first blush, to all the party. While they stood confounded and indecisive, undetermined in which way to move, a sudden flight of wings was heard, even from the centre of the bay, at a little distance above the spot where they had striven for entrance. They looked up, and beheld about fifty buzzards—those notorious domestic vultures of the south—ascending from the interior of the bay, and perching along upon the branches of the loftier trees by which it was overhung. Even were the character of these birds less known, the particular business in which they had just then been engaged, was betrayed by huge gobbets of flesh which some of them had borne aloft in their flight, and still continued to rend with beak and bill, as they tottered upon the branches where they stood. A piercing scream issued from the lips of James Grayling as he beheld this sight, and strove to scare the offensive birds from their repast.

"The poor major! the poor major!" was the involuntary and agonized exclamation of the youth. "Did I ever think he would come to this!"

The search, thus guided and encouraged, was pressed with renewed diligence and spirit; and, at length, an opening was found

through which it was evident that a body of considerable size had but recently gone. The branches were broken from the small shrub trees, and the undergrowth trodden into the earth. They followed this path, and, as is the case commonly with waste tracts of this description, the density of the growth diminished sensibly at every step they took, till they reached a little pond, which, though circumscribed in area, and full of cypresses, yet proved to be singularly deep. Indeed, it was an alligator-hole, where, in all probability, a numerous tribe of these reptiles had their dwelling. Here, on the edge of the pond, they discovered the object which had drawn the keen-sighted vultures to their feast, in the body of a horse, which James Grayling at once identified as that of Major Spencer. The carcass of the animal was already very much torn and lacerated. The eyes were plucked out, and the animal completely disembowelled. Yet, on examination, it was not difficult to discover the manner of his death. This had been effected by fire-arms. Two bullets had passed through his skull, just above the eyes, either of which must have been fatal. The murderer had led the horse to the spot, and committed the cruel deed where his body was found. The search was now continued for that of the owner, but for some time it proved ineffectual. At length, the keen eyes of James Grayling detected, amidst a heap of moss and green sedge that rested beside an overthrown tree, whose branches jutted into the pond, a whitish, but discoloured object, that did not seem native to the place. Bestriding the fallen tree, he was enabled to reach this object, which, with a burst of grief, he announced to the distant party was the hand and arm of his unfortunate friend, the wristband of the shirt being the conspicuous object which had first caught his eye. Grasping this, he drew the corse, which had been thrust beneath the branches of the tree, to the surface; and, with the assistance of his uncle, it was finally brought to the dry land. Here it underwent a careful examination. The head was very much disfigured; the skull was fractured in several places by repeated blows of some hard instrument, inflicted chiefly from behind. A closer inspection revealed a bullet-hole in the abdomen, the first wound, in all probability, which the unfortunate gentleman received, and by which he was, perhaps, tumbled from his horse. The blows on the head would

seem to have been unnecessary, unless the murderer—whose proceedings appeared to have been singularly deliberate,—was resolved upon making "assurance doubly sure." But, as if the watchful Providence had meant that nothing should be left doubtful which might tend to the complete conviction of the criminal, the constable stumbled upon the butt of the broken pistol which had been found in Macleod's trunk. This he picked up on the edge of the pond in which the corse had been discovered, and while James Grayling and his uncle, Sparkman, were engaged in drawing it from the water. The place where the fragment was discovered at once denoted the pistol as the instrument by which the final blows were inflicted. "'Fore God," said the judge to the criminal, as these proofs were submitted on the trial, "you may be a very innocent man after all, as, by my faith, I do think there have been many murderers before you; but you ought, nevertheless, to be hung as an example to all other persons who suffer such strong proofs of guilt to follow their innocent misdoings. Gentlemen of the jury, if this person, Macleod or Macnab, didn't murder Major Spencer, either you or I did; and you must now decide which of us it is! I say, gentlemen of the jury, either you, or I, or the prisoner at the bar, murdered this man; and if you have any doubts which of us it was, it is but justice and mercy that you should give the prisoner the benefit of your doubts; and so find your verdict. But, before God, should you find him not guilty, Mr. Attorney there can scarcely do anything wiser than to put us all upon trial for the deed."

The jury, it may be scarcely necessary to add, perhaps under certain becoming fears of an alternative such as his honour had suggested, brought in a verdict of "Guilty," without leaving the panel; and Macnab, *alias* Macleod, was hung at White Point, Charleston, somewhere about the year 178—.

"And here," said my grandmother, devoutly, "you behold a proof of God's watchfulness to see that murder should not be hidden, and that the murderer should not escape. You see that he sent the spirit of the murdered man—since, by no other mode could the truth have been revealed—to declare the crime, and to discover the criminal. But for that ghost, Macnab would have got off to Scotland, and probably have been living to this very

day on the money that he took from the person of the poor major."

As the old lady finished the ghost story, which, by the way, she had been tempted to relate for the fiftieth time in order to combat my father's ridicule of such superstitions, the latter took up the thread of the narrative.

"Now, my son," said he, "as you have heard all that your grandmother has to say on this subject, I will proceed to show you what you have to believe, and what not. It is true that Macnab murdered Spencer in the manner related; that James Grayling made the dicovery and prosecuted the pursuit; found the body and brought the felon to justice; that Macnab suffered death, and confessed the crime; alleging that he was moved to do so, as well because of the money that he suspected Spencer to have in his possession, as because of the hate which he felt for a man who had been particularly bold and active in cutting up a party of Scotch loyalists to which he belonged, on the borders of North Carolina. But the appearance of the spectre was nothing more than the work of a quick imagination, added to a shrewd and correct judgment. James Grayling saw no ghost, in fact, but such as was in his own mind; and, though the instance was one of a most remarkable character, one of singular combination, and well depending circumstances, still, I think it is to be accounted for by natural and very simple laws."

The old lady was indignant.

"And how could he see the ghost just on the edge of the same bay where the murder had been committed, and where the body of the murdered man even then was lying?"

My father did not directly answer the demand, but proceeded thus:—

"James Grayling, as we know, mother, was a very ardent, impetuous, sagacious man. He had the sanguine, the race-horse temperament. He was generous, always prompt and ready, and one who never went backward. What he did, he did quickly, boldly, and thoroughly! He never shrank from trouble of any kind: nay, he rejoiced in the constant encounter with difficulty and trial; and his was the temper which commands and enthrals mankind. He felt deeply and intensely whatever occupied his

mind, and when he parted from his friend he brooded over little else than their past communion and the great distance by which they were to be separated. The dull travelling wagon-gait at which he himself was compelled to go, was a source of annoyance to him; and he became sullen, all the day, after the departure of his friend. When, on the evening of the next day, he came to the house where it was natural to expect that Major Spencer would have slept the night before, and he learned the fact that no one stopped there but the Scotchman, Macnab, we see that he was struck with the circumstance. He mutters it over to himself, "Strange, where the major could have gone!" His mind then naturally reverts to the character of the Scotchman; to the opinions and suspicions which had been already expressed of him by his uncle, and felt by himself. They had all, previously, come to the full conviction that Macnab was, and had always been, a tory, in spite of his protestations. His mind next, and very naturally, reverted to the insecurity of the highways; the general dangers of travelling at that period; the frequency of crime, and the number of desperate men who were everywhere to be met with. The very employment in which he was then engaged, in scouting the woods for the protection of the camp, was calculated to bring such reflections to his mind. If these precautions were considered necessary for the safety of persons so poor, so wanting in those possessions which might prompt cupidity to crime, how much more necessary were precautions in the case of a wealthy gentleman like Major Spencer! He then remembered the conversation with the major at the camp-fire, when they fancied that the Scotchman was sleeping. How natural to think then, that he was all the while awake; and, if awake, he must have heard him speak of the wealth of his companion. True, the major, with more prudence than himself, denied that he had any money about him, more than would bear his expenses to the city; but such an assurance was natural enough to the lips of a traveller who knew the dangers of the country. That the man, Macnab, was not a person to be trusted, was the equal impression of Joel Sparkman and his nephew from the first. The probabilities were strong that he would rob and perhaps murder, if he might hope to do so with impunity; and as the

youth made the circuit of the bay in the darkness and solemn stillness of the night, its gloomy depths and mournful shadows, naturally gave rise to such reflections as would be equally active in the mind of a youth, and of one somewhat familiar with the arts and usages of strife. He would see that the spot was just the one in which a practised partisan would delight to set an ambush for an unwary foe. There ran the public road, with a little sweep, around two-thirds of the extent of its dense and impenetrable thickets. The ambush could lie concealed, and at ten steps command the bosom of its victim. Here, then, you perceive that the mind of James Grayling, stimulated by an active and sagacious judgment, had by gradual and reasonable stages come to these conclusions: that Major Spencer was an object to tempt a robber; that the country was full of robbers; that Macnab was one of them; that this was the very spot in which a deed of blood could be most easily committed, and most easily concealed; and, one important fact, that gave strength and coherence to the whole, that Major Spencer had not reached a well-known point of destination, while Macnab had.

"With these thoughts, thus closely linked together, the youth forgets the limits of his watch and his circuit. This fact, alone, proves how active his imagination had become. It leads him forward, brooding more and more on the subject, until, in the very exhaustion of his body, he sinks down beneath a tree. He sinks down and falls asleep; and in his sleep, what before was plausible conjecture, becomes fact, and the creative properties of his imagination give form and vitality to all his fancies. These forms are bold, broad, and deeply coloured, in due proportion with the degree of force which they receive from probability. Here, he sees the image of his friend; but, you will remark—and this should almost conclusively satisfy any mind that all that he sees is the work of his imagination,—that, though Spencer tells him that he is murdered, and by Macnab, he does not tell him how, in what manner, or with what weapons. Though he sees him pale and ghostlike, he does not see, nor can he say, where his wounds are! He sees his pale features distinctly, and his garments are bloody. Now, had he seen the spectre in the true appearances of death, as he was subsequently found, he would not

have been able to discern his features, which were battered, according to his own account, almost out of all shape of humanity, and covered with mud; while his clothes would have streamed with mud and water, rather than with blood."

"Ah!" exclaimed the old lady, my grandmother, "it's hard to make you believe anything that you don't see; you are like Saint Thomas in the Scriptures; but how do you propose to account for his knowing that the Scotchman was on board the Falmouth packet? Answer to that!"

"That is not a more difficult matter than any of the rest. You forget that in the dialogue which took place between James and Major Spencer at the camp, the latter told him that he was about to take passage for Europe in the Falmouth packet, which then lay in Charleston harbour, and was about to sail. Macnab heard all that."

"True enough, and likely enough," returned the old lady; "but, though you show that it was Major Spencer's intention to go to Europe in the Falmouth packet, that will not show that it was also the intention of the murderer."

"Yet what more probable, and how natural for James Grayling to imagine such a thing! In the first place he knew that Macnab was a Briton; he felt convinced that he was a tory; and the inference was immediate, that such a person would scarcely have remained long in a country where such characters laboured under so much odium, disfranchisement, and constant danger from popular tumults. The fact that Macnab was compelled to disguise his true sentiments, and affect those of the people against whom he fought so vindictively, shows what was his sense of the danger which he incurred. Now, it is not unlikely that Macnab was quite as well aware that the Falmouth packet was in Charleston, and about to sail, as Major Spencer. No doubt he was pursuing the same journey, with the same object, and had he not murdered Spencer, they would, very likely, have been fellow-passengers together to Europe. But, whether he knew the fact before or not, he probably heard it stated by Spencer while he seemed to be sleeping; and, even supposing that he did not then know, it was enough that he found this to be the fact on reaching the city. It was an *after-thought* to fly to Europe with his ill-

gotten spoils; and whatever may have appeared a politic course to the criminal, would be a probable conjecture in the mind of him by whom he was suspected. The whole story is one of strong probabilities which happened to be verified; and, if proving anything, proves only that which we know—that James Grayling was a man of remarkably sagacious judgment, and quick, daring imagination. This quality of imagination, by the way, when possessed very strongly in connexion with shrewd common sense and well-balanced general faculties, makes that particular kind of intellect which, because of its promptness and powers of creation and combination, we call genius. It is genius only which can make ghosts, and James Grayling was a genius. He never, my son, saw any other ghosts than those of his own making!"

I heard my father with great patience to the end, though he seemed very tedious. He had taken a great deal of pains to destroy one of my greatest sources of pleasure. I need not add that I continued to believe in the ghost, and, with my grandmother, to reject the philosophy. It was more easy to believe the one than to comprehend the other.

THE TWO CAMPS.

A LEGEND OF THE OLD NORTH STATE.

"These, the forest born
And forest nurtured—a bold, hardy race,
Fearless and frank, unfettered, with big souls
In hour of danger."

CHAPTER I.

It is frequently the case, in the experience of the professional novelist or tale-writer, that his neighbour comes in to his assistance when he least seeks, and, perhaps, least desires any succour. The worthy person, man or woman, however,—probably some excellent octogenarian whose claims to be heard are based chiefly upon the fact that he himself no longer possesses the faculty of hearing,—has some famous incident, some wonderful fact, of which he has been the eye-witness, or of which he has heard from his great-grandmother, which he fancies is the very thing to be woven into song or story. Such is the strong possession which the matter takes of his brain, that, if the novelist whom he seeks to benefit does not live within trumpet-distance, he gives him the narrative by means of post, some three sheets of stiff foolscap, for which the hapless tale-writer, whose works are selling in cheap editions at twelve or twenty cents, pays a sum of one dollar sixty-two postage. Now, it so happens, to increase the evil, that, in ninety-nine cases in the hundred, the fact thus laboriously stated is not worth a straw—consisting of some simple deed of violence, some mere murder, a downright blow with gun-butt or cudgel over the skull, or a hidden thrust, three inches deep, with dirk or bowie knife, into the abdomen, or at random among the lower ribs. The man

dies and the murderer gets off to Texas, or is prematurely caught and stops by the way—and still stops by the way! The thing is fact, no doubt. The narrator saw it himself, or his brother saw it, or—more solemn, if not more certain testimony still—his grandmother saw it, long before he had eyes to see at all. The circumstance is attested by a cloud of witnesses—a truth solemnly sworn to—and yet, for the purposes of the tale-writer, of no manner of value. This assertion may somewhat conflict with the received opinions of many, who, accustomed to find deeds of violence recorded in almost every work of fiction, from the time of Homer to the present day, have rushed to the conclusion that this is all, and overlook that labour of the artist, by which an ordinary event is made to assume the character of novelty; in other words, to become an extraordinary event. The least difficult thing in the world, on the part of the writer of fiction, is to find the assassin and the bludgeon; the art is to make them appear in the right place, strike at the right time, and so adapt one fact to another, as to create mystery, awaken curiosity, inspire doubt as to the result, and bring about the catastrophe, by processes which shall be equally natural and unexpected. All that class of sagacious persons, therefore, who fancy they have found a mare's nest, when, in fact, they are only gazing at a goose's, are respectfully counselled that no fact—no tradition—is of any importance to the artist, unless it embodies certain peculiar characteristics of its own, or unless it illustrates some history about which curiosity has already been awakened. A mere brutality, in which John beats and bruises Ben, and Ben in turn shoots John, putting eleven slugs, or thereabouts, between his collar-bone and vertebræ—or, maybe, stabs him under his left pap, or any where you please, is just as easily conceived by the novelist, without the help of history. Nay, for that matter, he would perhaps rather not have any precise facts in his way, in such cases, as then he will be able to regard the picturesque in the choice of his weapon, and to put the wounds in such parts of the body, as will better bear the examination of all persons. I deem it right to throw out this hint, just at this moment, as well for the benefit of my order as for my own protection. The times are hard, and the post-office requires all its dues in hard money. Literary men are not pro-

verbially prepared at all seasons for any unnecessary outlay—and to be required to make advances for commodities of which they have on hand, at all times, the greatest abundance, is an injustice which, it is to be hoped, that this little intimation will somewhat lessen. We take for granted, therefore, that our professional brethren will concur with us in saying to the public, that we are all sufficiently provided with "disastrous chances" for some time to come—that our "moving accidents by flood and field" are particularly numerous, and of "hair-breadth 'scapes" we have enough to last a century. Murders, and such matters, as they are among the most ordinary events of the day, are decidedly vulgar; and, for mere cudgelling and bruises, the taste of the belles-lettres reader, rendered delicate by the monthly magazines, has voted them equally gross and unnatural.

But, if the character of the materials usually tendered to the novelist by the incident-mongers, is thus ordinarily worthless as we describe it, we sometimes are fortunate in finding an individual, here and there, in the deep forests,—a sort of recluse, hale and lusty, but white-headed,—who unfolds from his own budget of experience a rare chronicle, on which we delight to linger. Such an one breathes life into his deeds. We see them as we listen to his words. In lieu of the dead body of the fact, we have its living spirit—subtle, active, breathing and burning, and fresh in all the provocations and associations of life. Of this sort was the admirable characteristic narrative of Horse-Shoe Robinson, which we owe to Kennedy, and for which he was indebted to the venerable hero of the story. When we say that the subject of the sketch which follows was drawn from not dissimilar sources, we must beg our readers not to understand us as inviting any reference to that able and national story—with which it is by no means our policy or wish to invite or provoke comparison.

CHAPTER II.

THERE are probably some old persons still living upon the upper dividing line between North and South Carolina, who still remember the form and features of the venerable Daniel Nelson. The old man was still living so late as 1817. At that period he removed to Mississippi, where, we believe, he died in less than three months after his change of residence. An old tree does not bear transplanting easily, and does not long survive it. Daniel Nelson came from Virginia when a youth. He was one of the first who settled on the southern borders of North Carolina, or, at least in that neighbourhood where he afterwards passed the greatest portion of his days.

At that time the country was not only a forest, but one thickly settled with Indians. It constituted the favourite hunting-grounds for several of their tribes. But this circumstance did not discourage young Nelson. He was then a stalwart youth, broad-chested, tall, with a fiery eye, and an almost equally fiery soul—certainly with a very fearless one. His companions, who were few in number, were like himself. The spirit of old Daniel Boone was a more common one than is supposed. Adventure gladdened and excited their hearts,—danger only seemed to provoke their determination,—and mere hardship was something which their frames appeared to covet. It was as refreshing to them as drink. Having seen the country, and struck down some of its game,—tasted of its bear-meat and buffalo, its deer and turkey,—all, at that time, in the greatest abundance,—they returned for the one thing most needful to a brave forester in a new country,—a good, brisk, fearless wife, who, like the damsel in Scripture, would go whithersoever went the husband to whom her affections were surrendered. They had no fear, these bold young hunters, to make a home and rear an infant family in regions so remote from the secure walks of civilization. They had met and made an acquaintance and a sort of friendship with the Indians, and, in the superior vigour of

their own frames, their greater courage, and better weapons, they perhaps had come to form a too contemptuous estimate of the savage. But they were not beguiled by him into too much confidence. Their log houses were so constructed as to be fortresses upon occasion, and they lived not so far removed from one another, but that the leaguer of one would be sure, in twenty-four hours, to bring the others to his assistance. Besides, with a stock of bear-meat and venison always on hand, sufficient for a winter, either of these fortresses might, upon common calculations, be maintained for several weeks against any single band of the Indians, in the small numbers in which they were wont to range together in those neighbourhoods. In this way these bold pioneers took possession of the soil, and paved the way for still mightier generations. Though wandering, and somewhat averse to the tedious labours of the farm, they were still not wholly unmindful of its duties; and their open lands grew larger every season, and increasing comforts annually spoke for the increasing civilization of the settlers. Corn was in plenty in proportion to the bear-meat, and the squatters almost grew indifferent to those first apprehensions, which had made them watch the approaches of the most friendly Indian as if he had been an enemy. At the end of five years, in which they had suffered no hurt and but little annoyance of any sort from their wild neighbours, it would seem as if this confidence in the security of their situation was not without sufficient justification.

But, just then, circumstances seemed to threaten an interruption of this goodly state of things. The Indians were becoming discontented. Other tribes, more frequently in contact with the larger settlements of the whites,—wronged by them in trade, or demoralized by drink,—complained of their sufferings and injuries, or, as is more probable, were greedy to obtain their treasures, in bulk, which they were permitted to see, but denied to enjoy, or only in limited quantity. Their appetites and complaints were transmitted, by inevitable sympathies, to their brethren of the interior, and our worthy settlers upon the Haw, were rendered anxious at signs which warned them of a change in the peaceful relations which had hitherto existed in all the intercourse between the differing races. We need not dwell upon or describe these

signs, with which, from frequent narratives of like character, our people are already sufficiently familiar. They were easily understood by our little colony, and by none more quickly than Daniel Nelson. They rendered him anxious, it is true, but not apprehensive; and, like a good husband, while he strove not to frighten his wife by what he said, he deemed it necessary to prepare her mind for the worst that might occur. This task over, he felt somewhat relieved, though, when he took his little girl, now five years old, upon his knee that evening, and looked upon his infant boy in the lap of his mother, he felt his anxieties very much increase; and that very night he resumed a practice which he had latterly abandoned, but which had been adopted as a measure of strict precaution, from the very first establishment of their little settlement. As soon as supper was over, he resumed his rifle, thrust his *couteau de chasse* into his belt, and, taking his horn about his neck, and calling up his trusty dog, Clinch, he proceeded to scour the woods immediately around his habitation. This task, performed with the stealthy caution of the hunter, occupied some time, and, as the night was clear, a bright starlight, the weather moderate, and his own mood restless, he determined to strike through the forest to the settlement of Jacob Ransom, about four miles off, in order to prompt him, and, through him, others of the neighbourhood, to the continued exercise of a caution which he now thought necessary. The rest of this night's adventure we propose to let him tell in his own words, as he has been heard to relate it a thousand times in his old age, at a period of life when, with one foot in his grave, to suppose him guilty of falsehood, or of telling that which he did not himself fervently believe, would be, among all those who knew him, to suppose the most impossible and extravagant thing in the world.

CHAPTER III.

"WELL, my friends," said the veteran, then seventy, drawing his figure up to its fullest height, and extending his right arm, while his left still grasped the muzzle of his ancient rifle, which he swayed from side to side, the butt resting on the floor—"Well, my friends, seeing that the night was cl'ar, and there was no wind, and feeling as how I didn't want for sleep, I called to Clinch and took the path for Jake Ransom's. I knew that Jake was a sleepy sort of chap, and if the redskins caught any body napping, he'd, most likely, be the man. But I confess, 'twarn't so much for his sake, as for the sake of all,—of my own as well as the rest;—for, when I thought how soon, if we warn't all together in the business, I might see, without being able to put in, the long yellow hair of Betsy and the babies twirling on the thumbs of some painted devil of the tribe,—I can't tell you how I felt, but it warn't like a human, though I shivered mightily like one,—'twas wolfish, as if the hair was turned in and rubbing agin the very heart within me. I said my prayers, where I stood, looking up at the stars, and thinking that, after all, all was in the hands and the marcy of God. This sort o' thinking quieted me, and I went ahead pretty free, for I knew the track jest as well by night as by day, though I didn't go so quick, for I was all the time on the look-out for the enemy. Now, after we reached a place in the woods where there was a gully and a mighty bad crossing, there were two roads to get to Jake's—one by the hollows, and one jest across the hills. I don't know why, but I didn't give myself time to think, and struck right across the hill, though that was rather the longest way.

"Howsomedever, on I went, and Clinch pretty close behind me. The dog was a good dog, with a mighty keen nose to hunt, but jest then he didn't seem to have the notion for it. The hill was a sizeable one, a good stretch to foot, and I began to remember, after awhile, that I had been in the woods from blessed dawn;

and that made me see how it was with poor Clinch, and why he didn't go for'ad; but I was more than half way, and wasn't guine to turn back till I had said my say to Jake. Well, when I got to the top of the hill, I stopped, and rubbed my eyes. I had cause to rub 'em, for what should I see at a distance but a great fire. At first I was afeard lest it was Jake's house, but I considered, the next moment, that he lived to the left, and this fire was cl'ar to the right, and it did seem to me as if 'twas more near to my own. Here was something to scare a body. But I couldn't stay there looking, and it warn't now a time to go to Jake's; so I turned off, and, though Clinch was mighty onwilling, I bolted on the road to the fire. I say road, but there was no road; but the trees warn't over-thick, and the land was too poor for undergrowth; so we got on pretty well, considering. But, what with the tire I had had, and the scare I felt, it seemed as if I didn't get for'ad a bit. There was the fire still burning as bright and almost as far off as ever. When I saw this I stopt and looked at Clinch, and he stopped and looked at me, but neither of us had any thing to say. Well, after a moment's thinking, it seemed as if I shouldn't be much of a man to give up when I had got so far, so I pushed on. We crossed more than one little hill, then down and through the hollow, and then up the hill again. At last we got upon a small mountain the Indians called Nolleehatchie, and then it seemed as if the fire had come to a stop, for it was now burning bright, on a little hill below me, and not two hundred yards in front. It was a regular camp fire, pretty big, and there was more than a dozen Indians sitting round it. 'Well,' says I to myself, 'it's come upon us mighty sudden, and what's to be done? Not a soul in the settlement knows it but myself, and nobody's on the watch. They'll be sculped, every human of them, in their very beds, or, moutbe, waken up in the blaze, to be shot with arrows as they run.' I was in a cold sweat to think of it. I didn't know what to think and what to do. I looked round to Clinch, and the strangest thing of all was to see him sitting quiet on his haunches, looking at me, and at the stars, and not at the fire jest before him. Now, Clinch was a famous fine hunting dog, and jest as good on an Indian trail as any other. He know'd my ways, and what I wanted, and would give tongue, or keep it

still, jest as I axed him. It was sensible enough, jest then, that he shouldn't bark, but, dang it!—he didn't even seem to see. Now, there warn't a dog in all the settlement so quick and keen to show sense as Clinch, even when he didn't say a word;—and to see him looking as if he didn't know and didn't care what was a-going on, with his eyes sot in his head and glazed over with sleep, was, as I may say, very onnatural, jest at that time, in a dog of any onderstanding. So I looked at him, half angry, and when he saw me looking at him, he jest stretched himself off, put his nose on his legs, and went to sleep in 'arnest. I had half a mind to lay my knife-handle over his head, but I considered better of it, and though it did seem the strangest thing in the world that he shouldn't even try to get to the fire, for warm sake, yet I recollected that dog natur', like human natur', can't stand every thing, and he hadn't such good reason as I had, to know that the Indians were no longer friendly to us. Well, there I stood, a pretty considerable chance, looking, and wondering, and onbeknowing what to do. I was mighty beflustered. But at last I felt ashamed to be so oncertain, and then again it was a needcessity that we should know the worst one time or another, so I determined to push for'ad. I was no slouch of a hunter, as you may suppose; so, as I was nearing the camp, I begun sneaking; and, taking it sometimes on hands and knees, and sometimes flat to the ground, where there was neither tree nor bush to cover me, I went ahead, Clinch keeping close behind me, and not showing any notion of what I was after. It was a slow business, because it was a ticklish business; but I was a leetle too anxious to be altogether so careful as a good sneak ought to be, and I went on rather faster than I would advise any young man to go in a time of war, when the inimy is in the neighbourhood. Well, as I went, there was the fire, getting larger and larger every minute, and there were the Indians round it, getting plainer and plainer. There was so much smoke that there was no making out, at any distance, any but their figures, and these, every now and then, would be so wrapt in the smoke that not more than half of them could be seen at the same moment. At last I stopped, jest at a place where I thought I could make out all that I wanted. There was a sizeable rock before me, and I leaned my elbows on it to look.

I reckon I warn't more than thirty yards from the fire. There were some bushes betwixt us, and what with the bushes and the smoke, it was several minutes before I could separate man from man, and see what they were all adoing, and when I did, it was only for a moment at a time, when a puff of smoke would wrap them all, and make it as difficult as ever. But when I did contrive to see clearly, the sight was one to worry me to the core, for, in the midst of the redskins, I could see a white one, and that white one a woman. There was no mistake. There were the Indians, some with their backs, and some with their faces to me; and there, a little a-one side, but still among them, was a woman. When the smoke blowed off, I could see her white face, bright like any star, shining out of the clouds, and looking so pale and ghastly that my blood cruddled in my veins to think lest she might be dead from fright. But it couldn't be so, for she was sitting up and looking about her. But the Indians were motionless. They jest sat or lay as when I first saw them—doing nothing—saying nothing, but jest as motionless as the stone under my elbow. I couldn't stand looking where I was, so I began creeping again, getting nigher and nigher, until it seemed to me as if I ought to be able to read every face. But what with the paint and smoke, I couldn't make out a single Indian. Their figures seemed plain enough in their buffalo-skins and blankets, but their faces seemed always in the dark. But it wasn't so with the woman. I could make her out clearly. She was very young; I reckon not more than fifteen, and it seemed to me as if I knew her looks very well. She was very handsome, and her hair was loosed upon her back. My heart felt strange to see her. I was weak as any child. It seemed as if I could die for the gal, and yet I hadn't strength enough to raise my rifle to my shoulder. The weakness kept on me the more I looked; for every moment seemed to make the poor child more and more dear to me. But the strangest thing of all was to see how motionless was every Indian in the camp. Not a word was spoken—not a limb or finger stirred. There they sat, or lay, round about the fire, like so many effigies, looking at the gal, and she looking at them. I never was in such a fix of fear and weakness in my life. What was I to do? I had got so nigh that I could have stuck my knife, with a jerk, into the heart of any one

of the party, yet I hadn't the soul to lift it; and before I knew where I was, I cried like a child. But my crying didn't make 'em look about 'em. It only brought my poor dog Clinch leaping upon me, and whining, as if he wanted to give me consolation. Hardly knowing what I did, I tried to set him upon the camp, but the poor fellow didn't seem to understand me; and in my desperation, for it was a sort of madness growing out of my scare, I jumped headlong for'ad, jest where I saw the party sitting, willing to lose my life rather than suffer from such a strange sort of misery.

CHAPTER IV.

"WILL you believe me! there were no Indians, no young woman, no fire! I stood up in the very place where I had seen the blaze and the smoke, and there was nothing! I looked for'ad and about me—there was no sign of fire any where. Where I stood was covered with dry leaves, the same as the rest of the forest. I was stupefied. I was like a man roused out of sleep by a strange dream, and seeing nothing. All was dark and silent. The stars were overhead, but that was all the light I had. I was more scared than ever, and, as it's a good rule when a man feels that he can do nothing himself, to look to the great God who can do every thing, I kneeled down and said my prayers—the second time that night that I had done the same thing, and the second time, I reckon, that I had ever done so in the woods. After that I felt stronger. I felt sure that this sign hadn't been shown to me for nothing; and while I was turning about, looking and thinking to turn on the back track for home, Clinch began to prick up his ears and waken up. I clapped him on his back, and got my knife ready. It might be a *painter* that stirred him, for he could scent that beast a great distance. But, as he showed no fright, only a sort of quickening, I knew there was nothing to fear. In a moment he started off, and went boldly ahead. I followed him, but hadn't gone twenty steps down the hill and into the hollow, when I heard something like a groan. This quickened me, and keeping up with the dog, he led me to the foot of the hollow, where was a sort of pond. Clinch ran right for it, and another groan set me in the same direction. When I got up to the dog, he was on the butt-end of an old tree that had fallen, I reckon, before my time, and was half buried in the water. I jumped on it, and walked a few steps for'ad, when, what should I see but a human, half across the log, with his legs hanging in the water, and his head down. I called Clinch back out of my way, and *went to* the spot. The groans were pretty constant. I stooped

down and laid my hands upon the person, and, as I felt the hair, I knew it was an Indian. The head was clammy with blood, so that my fingers stuck, and when I attempted to turn it, to look at the face, the groan was deeper than ever; but 'twarn't a time to suck one's fingers. I took him up, clapped my shoulders to it, and, fixing my feet firmly on the old tree, which was rather slippery, I brought the poor fellow out without much trouble. Though tall, he was not heavy, and was only a boy of fourteen or fifteen. The wonder was how a lad like that should get into such a fix. Well, I brought him out and laid him on the dry leaves. His groans stopped, and I thought he was dead, but I felt his heart, and it was still warm, and I thought, though I couldn't be sure, there was a beat under my fingers. What to do was the next question. It was now pretty late in the night. I had been all day a-foot, and, though still willing to go, yet the thought of such a weight on my shoulders made me stagger. But 'twouldn't do to leave him where he was to perish. I thought, if so be I had a son in such a fix, what would I think of the stranger who should go home and wait till daylight to give him help! No, darn my splinters, said I,—though I had just done my prayers,—if I leave the lad—and, tightening my girth, I give my whole soul to it, and hoisted him on my shoulders. My cabin, I reckoned, was good three miles off. You can guess what trouble I had, and what a tire under my load, before I got home and laid the poor fellow down by the fire. I then called up Betsy, and we both set to work to see if we could stir up the life that was in him. She cut away his hair, and I washed the blood from his head, which was chopped to the bone, either with a knife or hatchet. It was a God's blessing it hadn't gone into his brain, for it was fairly enough aimed for it, jest above the ear. When we come to open his clothes, we found another wound in his side. This was done with a knife, and, I suppose, was pretty deep. He had lost blood enough, for all his clothes were stiff with it. We knew nothing much of doctoring, but we had some rum in the cabin, and after washing his wounds clean with it, and pouring some down his throat, he began to groan more freely, and by that we knew he was coming to a nateral feeling. We rubbed his body down with warm cloths, and after a little while, seeing that he made some

signs, I give him water as much as he could drink. This seemed to do him good, and having done every thing that we thought could help him, we wrapped him up warmly before the fire, and I stretched myself off beside him. 'Twould be a long story to tell, step by step, how he got on. It's enough to say that he didn't die that bout. We got him on his legs in a short time, doing little or nothing for him more than we did at first. The lad was a good lad, though, at first, when he first came to his senses, he was mighty shy, wouldn't look steadily in our faces, and, I do believe, if he could have got out of the cabin, would have done so as soon as he could stagger. But he was too weak to try that, and, meanwhile, when he saw our kindness, he was softened. By little and little, he got to play with my little Lucy, who was not quite six years old; and, after a while, he seemed to be never better pleased than when they played together. The child, too, after her first fright, leaned to the lad, and was jest as willing to play with him as if he had been a cl'ar white like herself. He could say a few words of English from the beginning, and learnt quickly; but, though he talked tolerable free for an Indian, yet I could never get him to tell me how he was wounded, or by whom. His brow blackened when I spoke of it, and his lips would be shut together, as if he was ready to fight sooner than to speak. Well, I didn't push him to know, for I was pretty sure the head of the truth will be sure to come some time or other, if you once have it by the tail, provided you don't jerk it off by straining too hard upon it.

CHAPTER V.

"I SUPPOSE the lad had been with us a matter of six weeks, getting better every day, but so slowly that he had not, at the end of that time, been able to leave the picket. Meanwhile, our troubles with the Indians were increasing. As yet, there had been no bloodshed in our quarter, but we heard of murders and sculpings on every side, and we took for granted that we must have our turn. We made our preparations, repaired the pickets, laid in ammunition, and took turns for scouting nightly. At length, the signs of Indians got to be thick in our parts, though we could see none. Jake Ransom had come upon one of their camps after they had left it; and we had reason to apprehend every thing, inasmuch as the outlyers didn't show themselves, as they used to do, but prowled about the cabins and went from place to place, only by night, or by close skulking in the thickets. One evening after this, I went out as usual to go the rounds, taking Clinch with me, but I hadn't got far from the gate, when the dog stopped and gave a low bark;—then I knew there was mischief, so I turned round quietly, without making any show of scare, and got back safely, though not a minute too soon. They trailed me to the gate the moment after I had got it fastened, and were pretty mad, I reckon, when they found their plan had failed for surprising me. But for the keen nose of poor Clinch, with all my skill in scouting,—and it was not small even in that early day,—they'd 'a had me, and all that was mine, before the sun could open his eyes to see what they were after. Finding they had failed in their ambush, they made the woods ring with the war-whoop, which was a sign that they were guine to give us a regular siege. At the sound of the whoop, we could see the eyes of the Indian boy brighten, and his ears prick up, jest like a hound's when he first gets scent of the deer, or hears the horn of the hunter. I looked closely at the lad, and was dub'ous what to do. He moutbe only an enemy in the camp, and while I was

fighting in front, he might be cutting the throats of my wife and children within. I did not tell you that I had picked up his bow and arrows near the little lake where I had found him, and his hunting-knife was sticking in his belt when I brought him home. Whether to take these away from him, was the question. Suppose I did, a billet of wood would answer pretty near as well. I thought the matter over while I watched him. Thought runs mighty quick in time of danger! Well, after turning it over on every side, I concluded 'twas better to trust him jest as if he had been a sure friend. I couldn't think, after all we had done for him, that he'd be false, so I said to him—'Lenatewá!'—'twas so he called himself—'those are your people!' 'Yes!' he answered slowly, and lifting himself up as if he had been a lord—he was a stately-looking lad, and carried himself like the son of a Micco,* as he was—'Yes, they are the people of Lenatewá—must he go to them?' and he made the motion of going out. But I stopped him. I was not willing to lose the security which I had from his being a sort of prisoner. 'No,' said I; 'no, Lenatewá, not to-night. To-morrow will do. To-morrow you can tell them I am a friend, not an enemy, and they should not come to burn my wigwam.' 'Brother—friend!' said the lad, advancing with a sort of freedom and taking my hand. He then went to my wife, and did the same thing,—not regarding she was a woman,—'Brother—friend!' I watched him closely, watched his eye and his motions, and I said to Betsy, 'The lad is true; don't be afeard!' But we passed a weary night. Every now and then we could hear the whoop of the Indians. From the loop-holes we could see the light of three fires on different sides, by which we knew that they were prepared to cut off any help that might come to us from the rest of the settlement. But I didn't give in or despair. I worked at one thing or another all night, and though Lenatewá gave me no help, yet he sat quietly, or laid himself down before the fire, as if he had nothing in the world to do in the business. Next morning by daylight, I found him already dressed in the same bloody clothes which he had on when I found him. He had thrown aside all that I gave him, and though

* A prince or chief.

the hunting-shirt and leggins which he now wore, were very much stained with blood and dirt, he had fixed them about him with a good deal of care and neatness, as if preparing to see company. I must tell you that an Indian of good family always has a nateral sort of grace and dignity which I never saw in a white man. He was busily engaged looking through one of the loop-holes, and though I could distinguish nothing, yet it was cl'ar that he saw something to interest him mightily. I soon found out that, in spite of all my watchfulness, he had contrived to have some sort of correspondence and communication with those outside. This was a wonder to me then, for I did not recollect his bow and arrows. It seems that he had shot an arrow through one of the loop-holes, to the end of which he had fastened a tuft of his own hair. The effect of this was considerable, and to this it was owing that, for a few hours afterwards, we saw not an Indian. The arrow was shot at the very peep of day. What they were about, in the meantime, I can only guess, and the guess was only easy, after I had known all that was to happen. That they were in council what to do was cl'ar enough. I was not to know that the council was like to end in cutting some of their own throats instead of ours. But when we did see the enemy fairly, they came out of the woods in two parties, not actually separated, but not moving together. It seemed as if there was some strife among them. Their whole number could not be less than forty, and some eight or ten of these walked apart under the lead of a chief, a stout, dark-looking fellow, one-half of whose face was painted black as midnight, with a red circle round both his eyes. The other party was headed by an old white-headed chief, who couldn't ha' been less than sixty years—a pretty fellow, you may be sure, at his time of life, to be looking after sculps of women and children. While I was kneeling at my loop-hole looking at them, Lenatewá came to me, and touching me on the arm, pointed to the old chief, saying—'Micco Lenatewá Glucco,' by which I guessed he was the father or grandfather of the lad. 'Well,' I said, seeing that the best plan was to get their confidence and friendship if possible,—'Well, lad, go to your father and tell him what Daniel Nelson has done for you, and let's have peace. We can fight, boy, as you see; we have plenty of arms and provis-

ions; and with this rifle, though you may not believe it, I could pick off your father, the king, and that other chief, who has so devilled himself up with paint.' 'Shoot!' said the lad quickly, pointing to the chief of whom I had last spoken. 'Ah! he is your enemy then?' The lad nodded his head, and pointed to the wound on his temple, and that in his side. I now began to see the true state of the case. 'No,' said I; 'no, Lenatewá, I will shoot none. I am for peace. I would do good to the Indians, and be their friend. Go to your father and tell him so. Go, and make him be my friend.' The youth caught my hand, placed it on the top of his head, and exclaimed, 'Good!' I then attended him down to the gate, but, before he left the cabin, he stopped and put his hand on the head of little Lucy,—and I felt glad, for it seemed to say, 'you shan't be hurt—not a hair of your head!' I let him out, fastened up, and then hastened to the loop-hole.

CHAPTER VI.

"And now came a sight to tarrify. As soon as the Indians saw the young prince, they set up a general cry. I couldn't tell whether it was of joy, or what. He went for'ad boldly, though he was still quite weak, and the king at the head of his party advanced to meet him. The other and smaller party, headed by the black chief, whom young Lenatewá had told me to shoot, came forward also, but very slowly, and it seemed as if they were doubtful whether to come or go. Their leader looked pretty much beflustered. But they hadn't time for much study, for, after the young prince had met his father, and a few words had passed between them, I saw the finger of Lenatewá point to the black chief. At this, he lifted up his clenched fists, and worked his body as if he was talking angrily. Then, sudden, the war-whoop sounded from the king's party, and the other troop of Indians began to run, the black chief at their head; but he had not got twenty steps when a dozen arrows went into him, and he tumbled for'a'ds, and grappled with the earth. It was all over with him. His party was scattered on all sides, but were not pursued. It seemed that all the arrows had been aimed at the one person, and when he sprawled, there was an end to it: the whole affair was over in five minutes.

CHAPTER VII.

"It was a fortunate affair for us. Lenatewá soon brought the old Micco to terms of peace. For that matter, he had only consented to take up the red stick because it was reported by the black chief—who was the uncle of the young Micco, and had good reasons for getting him out of the way—that he had been murdered by the whites. This driv' the old man to desperation, and brought him down upon us. When he knew the whole truth, and saw what friends we had been to his son, there was no end to his thanks and promises. He swore to be my friend while the sun shone, while the waters run, and while the mountains stood, and I believe, if the good old man had been spared so long, he would have been true to his oath. But, while he lived, he kept it, and so did his son when he succeeded him as Micco Glucco. Year after year went by, and though there was frequent war between the Indians and the whites, yet Lenatewá kept it from our doors. He himself was at war several times with our people, but never with our settlement. He put his *totem* on our trees, and the Indians knew that they were sacred. But, after a space of eleven years, there was a change. The young prince seemed to have forgotten our friendship. We now never saw him among us, and, unfortunately, some of our young men—the young men of our own settlement—murdered three young warriors of the Ripparee tribe, who were found on horses stolen from us. I was very sorry when I heard it, and began to fear the consequences; and they came upon us when we least looked for it. I had every reason to think that Lenatewá would still keep the warfare from my little family, but I did not remember that he was the prince of a tribe only, and not of the nation. This was a national warfare, in which the whole Cherokee people were in arms. Many persons, living still, remember that terrible war, and how the Carolinians humbled them at last; but there's no telling how much blood was shed in that war, how many sculps taken, how

much misery suffered by young and old, men, women, and children. Our settlement had become so large and scattered that we had to build a sizeable blockhouse, which we stored, and to which we could retreat whenever it was necessary. We took possession of it on hearing from our scouts that Indian trails had been seen, and there we put the women and children, under a strong guard. By day we tended our farms, and only went to our families at night. We had kept them in this fix for five weeks or thereabouts, and there was no attack. The Indian signs disappeared, and we all thought the storm had blown over, and began to hope and to believe that the old friendship of Lenatewá had saved us. With this thinking, we began to be less watchful. The men would stay all night at the farms, and sometimes, in the day, would carry with them the women, and sometimes some even the children. I cautioned them agin this, but they mocked me, and said I was gitting old and scary. I told them, 'Wait and see who'll scare first.' But, I confess, not seeing any Indians in all my scouting, I began to feel and think like the rest, and to grow careless. I let Betsy go now and then with me to the farm, though she kept it from me that she had gone there more than once with Lucy, without any man protector. Still, as it was only a short mile and a half from the block, and we could hear of no Indians, it did not seem so venturesome a thing. One day we heard of some very large b'ars among the thickets—a famous range for them, about four miles from the settlement; and a party of us, Simon Lorris, Hugh Darling, Jake Ransom, William Harkless, and myself, taking our dogs, set off on the hunt. We started the b'ar with a rush, and I got the first shot at a mighty big she b'ar, the largest I had ever seen—lamed the critter slightly, and dashed into the thickets after her! The others pushed, in another direction, after the rest, leaving me to finish my work as I could.

"I had two dogs with me, Clap and Claw, but they were young things, and couldn't be trusted much in a close brush with a b'ar. Old Clinch was dead, or he'd ha' made other guess-work with the varmint. But, hot after the b'ar, I didn't think of the quality of the dogs till I found myself in a fair wrestle with the brute. I don't brag, my friends, but that *was* a fight. I tell you my

that long range of hills where I first saw that strange camp-fire, now eleven years gone, that turned out to be a deception, and it was nateral enough that the thing should come fresh into my mind, jest at that moment. While I was thinking over the wonder, and asking myself, as I had done over and often before, what it possibly could mean, I reached the top of one of the hills, from which I could see, in daylight, the whole country for a matter of ten miles or more on every side. What was my surprise, do you reckon, when there, jest on the very same hill opposite where I had seen that apparition of a camp, I saw another, and this time it was a raal one. There was a rousing blaze, and though the woods and undergrowth were thicker on this than on the other side, from which I had seen it before, yet I could make out that there were several figures, and them Indians. It sort o' made me easier to see the enemy before, and then I could better tell what I had to do. I was to spy out the camp, see what the red-devils were thinking to do, and what they had already done. I was a little better scout and hunter this time than when I made the same sort o' search before, and I reckoned that I could get nigh enough to see all that was going on, without stirring up any dust among 'em. But I had to keep the dogs back. I couldn't tie 'em up, for they'd howl; so I stripped my hunting-shirt and put it down for one to guard, and I gave my cap and horn to another. I knew they'd never leave 'em, for I had l'arned 'em all that sort of business—to watch as well as to fetch and carry. I then said a sort of short running prayer, and took the trail. I had to work for'ad slowly. If I had gone on this time as I did in that first camp transaction, I'd ha' lost my sculp to a sartainty. Well, to shorten a long business, I tell you that I got nigh enough, without scare or surprise, to see all that I cared to see, and a great deal more than I wished to see; and now, for the first time, I saw the meaning of that sight which I had, eleven years before, of the camp that come to nothing. I saw that first sight over again, the Indians round the fire, a young woman in the middle, and that young woman my own daughter, my child, my poor, dear Lucy!

CHAPTER VIII.

"THAT was a sight for a father. I can't tell you—and I won't try—how I felt. But I lay there, resting upon my hands and knees, jest as if I had been turned into stone with looking. I lay so for a good half hour, I reckon, without stirring a limb; and you could only tell that life was in me, by seeing the big drops that squeezed out of my eyes now and then, and by a sort of shivering that shook me as you sometimes see the canebrake shaking with the gust of the pond inside. I tried to pray to God for help, but I couldn't pray, and as for thinking, that was jest as impossible. But I could do nothing by looking, and, for that matter, it was pretty cla'r to me, as I stood, with no help—by myself—one rifle only and knife—I couldn't do much by moving. I could have lifted the gun, and in a twinkle. tumbled the best fellow in the gang, but what good was that guine to do me? I was never fond of blood-spilling. and if I could have been made sure of my daughter, I'd ha' been willing that the red devils should have had leave to live for ever. What was I to do? Go to the block? Who know'd if it warn't taken, with every soul in it? And where else was I to look for help? Nowhere, nowhere but to God! I groaned—I groaned so loud that I was dreadful 'feared that they'd hear me; but they were too busy among themselves, eating supper, and poor Lucy in the midst, not eating, but so pale, and looking so miserable—jest as I had seen her, when she was only a child—in the same fix, though 'twas only an appearance—eleven years ago! Well, at last, I turned off. As I couldn't say what to do, I was too miserable to look, and I went down to the bottom of the hill and rolled about on the ground, pulling the hair out of my head and groaning, as if that was to do me any good. Before I knew where I was, there was a hand on my shoulder. I jumped up to my feet, and flung my rifle over my head, meaning to bring the butt down upon the stranger—but his voice stopped me.

"'Brother,' said he, 'me Lenatewá!'

"The way he talked, his soft tones, made me know that the young prince meant to be friendly, and I gave him my hand; but the tears gushed out as I did so, and I cried out like a man struck in the very heart, while I pointed to the hill—'My child, my child!'

"'Be man!' said he, 'come!' pulling me away.

"'But, will you save her, Lenatewá?'

"He did not answer instantly, but led me to the little lake, and pointed to the old tree over which I had borne his lifeless body so many years ago. By that I knew he meant to tell me, he had not forgotten what I had done for him; and would do for me all he could. But this did not satisfy me. I must know how and when it was to be done, and what was his hope; for I could see from his caution, and leading me away from the camp, that he did not command the party, and had no power over them. He then asked me, if I had not seen the paint of the warriors in the camp. But I had seen nothing but the fix of my child. He then described the paint to me, which was his way of showing me that the party on the hill were his deadly enemies. The paint about their eyes was that of the great chief, his uncle, who had tried to murder him years ago, and who had been shot, in my sight, by the party of his father. The young chief, now in command of the band on the hill was the son of his uncle, and sworn to revenge the death of his father upon him, Lenatewá. This he made me onderstand in a few minutes. And he gave me farther to onderstand, that there was no way of getting my child from them onless by cunning. He had but two followers with him, and they were even then busy in making preparations. But of these preparations he either would not or could not give me any account; and I had to wait on him with all the patience I could muster; and no easy trial it was, for an Indian is the most cool and slow-moving creature in the world, unless he's actually fighting, and then he's about the quickest. After awhile, Lenatewá led me round the hill. We fetched a pretty smart reach, and before I knew where I was, he led me into a hollow that I had never seen before. Here, to my surprise, there were no less than twelve or fourteen horses fastened, that these red devils had stolen from the settlement that

very day, and mine was among them. I did not know it till the young prince told me.

"'Him soon move,' said he, pointing to one on the outside, which a close examination showed me to be my own—'Him soon move,'—and these words gave me a notion of his plan. But he did not allow me to have any hand in it—not jest then, at least. Bidding me keep a watch on the fire above, for the hollow in which we stood was at the foot of the very hill the Indians had made their camp on—though the stretch was a long one between—he pushed for'ad like a shadow, and so slily, so silently, that, though I thought myself a good deal of a scout before, I saw then that I warn't fit to hold a splinter to him. In a little time he had unhitched my horse, and quietly led him farther down the hollow, half round the hill, and then up the opposite hill. There was very little noise, the wind was from the camp, and, though they didn't show any alarm, I was never more scary in my life. I followed Lenatewá, and found where he had fastened my nag. He had placed him several hundred yards from the Indians, on his way to the block; and, where we now stood, owing to the bend of the hollow, the camp of the Indians was between us and where they had hitched the stolen horses. When I saw this, I began to guess something of his plan. Meantime, one after the other, his two followers came up, and made a long report to him in their own language. This done, he told me that three of my hunting companions had been sculped, the other, who was Hugh Darling, had got off cl'ar, though fired upon twice, and had alarmed the block, and that my daughter had been made prisoner at the farm to which she had gone without any company. This made me a little easier, and Lenatewá then told me what he meant to do. In course, I had to do something myself towards it. Off he went, with his two men, leaving me to myself. When I thought they had got pretty fairly round the hill, I started back for the camp, trying my best, you may be sure, to move as slily as Lenatewá. I got within twenty-five yards, I reckon, when I thought it better to lie by quietly and wait. I could see every head in the huddle, and my poor child among them, looking whiter than a sheet, beside their ugly painted skins. Well, I hadn't long to wait, when there was such an uproar among the stolen horses in the hollow

on the opposite side of the hill—such a trampling, such a whinnying and whickering, you never heard the like. Now, you must know, that a stolen horse, to an Indian, is jest as precious as a sweetheart to a white man; and when the rumpus reached the camp, there was a rush of every man among them, for his critter. Every redskin, but one, went over the hill after the horses, and he jumped up with the rest, but didn't move off. He stood over poor Lucy with his tomahawk, shaking it above her head, as if guine to strike every minute. She, poor child—I could see her as plain as the fire-light, for she sat jest on one side of it—her hands were clasped together. She was praying, for she must have looked every minute to be knocked on the head. You may depend, I found it very hard to keep in. I was a'most biling over, the more when I saw the red devil making his flourishes, every now and then, close to the child's ears, with his bloody we'pon. But it was a needcessity to keep in till the sounds died off pretty much, so as not to give them any scare this side, till they had dashed ahead pretty far 'pon the other. I don't know that I waited quite as long as I ought to, but I waited as long as my feelings would let me, and then I dropped the sight of my rifle as close as I could fix it on the breast of the Indian that had the keeping of my child. I took aim, but I felt I was a little tremorsome, and I stopped. I know'd I had but one shoot, and if I didn't onbutton him in that one, it would be a bad shoot for poor Lucy. I didn't fear to hit *her*, and I was pretty sure I'd hit him. But it must be a dead shot to do good, for I know'd if I only hurt him, that he'd sink the tomahawk in her head with what strength he had left him. I brought myself to it again, and this time I' felt strong. I could jest hear a little of the hubbub of men and horses afar off. I knew it was the time, and, resting the side of the muzzle against a tree, I give him the whole blessing of the bullet. I didn't stop to ask what luck, but run in, with a sort o' cry, to do the finishing with the knife. But the thing was done a'ready. The beast was on his back, and I only had to use the knife in cutting the vines that fastened the child to the sapling behind her. The brave gal didn't scream or faint. She could only say, 'Oh, my father!' and I could only say, 'Oh! my child!' And what a precious hug followed; but it was only for a minute. We had no time to

waste in hugging. We pushed at once for the place where I had left the critter, and if the good old nag ever used his four shanks to any purpose, he did that night. I reckon it was a joyful surprise to poor Betsy when we broke into the block. She had given it out for sartin that she'd never see me or the child again, with a nateral sculp on our heads.

CHAPTER IX.

"THERE's no need to tell you the whole story of this war between our people and the redskins. It's enough that I tell you of what happened to us, and our share in it. Of the great affair, and all the fights and burnings, you'll find enough in the printed books and newspapers. What I tell you, though you can't find it in any books, is jest as true, for all that. Of our share in it, the worst has already been told you. The young chief, Oloschottee —for that was his name—the cousin and the enemy of Lenatewá, had command of the Indians that were to surprise our settlements; and though he didn't altogether do what he expected and intended, he worked us quite enough of mischief as it was. He soon put fire to all our farms to draw us out of the block, but finding that wouldn't do, he left us; for an Indian gets pretty soon tired of a long siege where there is neither rum nor blood to git drunk on. His force was too small to trouble us in the block, and so he drawed off his warriors, and we saw no more of him until the peace. That followed pretty soon after General Middleton gave the nation that licking at Echotee,—a licking, I reckon, that they'll remember long after my day. At that affair Lenatewá got an ugly bullet in his throat, and if it hadn't been for one of his men, he'd ha' got a bag'net in his breast. They made a narrow run with him, head foremost down the hill, with a whole swad of the mounted men from the low country at their heels. It was some time after the peace before he got better of his hurt, though the Indians are naterally more skilful in cures than white men. By this time we had all gone home to our farms, and had planted and rebuilt, and begun to forget our troubles, when who should pop into our cabin one day, but Lenatewá. He had got quite well of his hurts. He was a monstrous fine-looking fellow, tall and handsome, and he was dressed in his very best. He wore pantaloons, like one of us, and his hunting shirt was a raally fine blue, with a white fringe. He wore no paint, and was quite nice and

neat with his person. We all received him as an old friend, and he stayed with us three days. Then he went, and was gone for a matter of two weeks, when he came back and stayed with us another three days. And so, off and on, he came to visit us, until Betsy said to me one day, 'Daniel, that Indian, Lenatewá, comes here after Lucy. Leave a woman to guess these things.' After she told me, I recollected that the young prince was quite watchful of Lucy, and would follow her out into the garden, and leave us, to walk with her. But then, again, I thought—'What if he is favourable to my daughter? The fellow's a good fellow; and a raal, noble-hearted Indian, that's sober, is jest as good, to my thinking, as any white man in the land.' But Betsy wouldn't hear to it. 'Her daughter never should marry a savage, and a heathen, and a redskin, while her head was hot:'—and while her head was so hot, what was I to do? All I could say was this only, 'Don't kick, Betsy, till you're spurred. 'Twill be time enough to give the young Chief his answer when he asks the question; and it won't do for us to treat him rudely, when we consider how much we owe him.' But she was of the mind that the boot was on the other leg,—that it was he and not us that owed the debt; and all that I could do couldn't keep her from showing the lad a sour face of it whenever he came. But he didn't seem much to mind this, since I was civil and kind to him. Lucy too, though her mother warned her against him, always treated him civilly as I told her; though she naterally would do so, for she couldn't so easily forget that dreadful night when she was a prisoner in the camp of the enimy, not knowing what to expect, with an Indian tomahawk over her head, and saved, in great part, by the cunning and courage of this same Lenatewá. The girl treated him kindly, and I was not sorry she did so. She walked and talked with him jest as if they had been brother and sister, and he was jest as polite to her as if he had been a born Frenchman.

"You may be sure, it was no pleasant sight to my wife to see them two go out to walk. 'Daniel Nelson,' said she, 'do you see and keep an eye on those people. There's no knowing what may happen. I do believe that Lucy has a liking for that redskin, and should they run!'—'Psho!' said I,—but that wouldn't do for

her, and so she made me watch the young people sure enough. 'Twarn't a business that I was overfond of, you may reckon, but I was a rough man and didn't know much of woman natur'. I left the judgment of such things to my wife, and did pretty much what she told me. Whenever they went out to walk, I followed them, rifle in hand; but it was only to please Betsy, for if I had seen the lad running off with the girl, I'm pretty sure, I'd never ha' been the man to draw trigger upon him. As I said before, Lenatewá was jest as good a husband as she could have had. But, poor fellow, the affair was never to come to that. One day, after he had been with us almost a week, he spoke softly to Lucy, and she got up, got her bonnet and went out with him. I didn't see them when they started, for I happened to be in the upper story,—a place where we didn't so much live, but where we used to go for shelter and defence whenever any Indians came about us. 'Daniel,' said my wife, and I knew by the quickness and sharpness of her voice what 'twas she had to tell me. But jest then I was busy, and, moreover, I didn't altogether like the sort of business upon which she wanted me to go. The sneaking after an enimy, in raal warfare, is an onpleasant sort of thing enough; but this sneaking after one that you think your friend is worse than running in a fair fight, and always gave me a sheepish feeling after it. Besides, I didn't fear Lenatewá, and I didn't fear my daughter. It's true, the girl treated him kindly and sweetly, but that was owing to the nateral sweetness of her temper, and because she felt how much sarvice he had been to her and all of us. So, instead of going out after them, I thought I'd give them a look through one of the loop-holes. Well, there they went, walking among the trees, not far from the picket, and no time out of sight. As I looked at them, I thought to myself, 'Would n't they make a handsome couple!' Both of them were tall and well made. As for Lucy, there wasn't, for figure, a finer set girl in all the settlement, and her face was a match for her figure. And then she was so easy in her motion, so graceful, and walked, or sate, or danced,—jest, for all the world, as if she was born only to do the particular thing she was doing. As for Lenatewá, he was a lad among a thousand. Now, a young Indian warrior, when he don't drink, is about the noblest-looking creature, as he

carries himself in the woods, that God ever did make. So straight, so proud, so stately, always as if he was doing a great action—as if he knew the whole world was looking at him. Lenatewa was pretty much the handsomest and noblest Indian I had ever seen; and then, I know'd him to be raally so noble. As they walked together, their heads a little bent downwards, and Lucy's pretty low, the thought flashed across me that, jest then, he was telling her all about his feelings; and perhaps, said I to myself, the girl thinks about it pretty much as I do. Moutbe now, she likes him better than any body she has ever seen, and what more nateral? Then I thought, if there is any picture in this life more sweet and beautiful than two young people jest beginning to feel love for one another, and walking together in the innocence of their hearts, under the shady trees,—I've never seen it! I laid the rifle on my lap, and sat down on the floor and watched 'em through the loop until I felt the water in my eyes. They walked backwards and for'ads, not a hundred yards off, and I could see all their motions, though I couldn't hear their words. An Indian don't use his hands much generally, but I could see that Lenatewá was using his,—not a great deal, but as if he felt every word he was saying. Then I began to think, what was I to do, if so be he was raally offering to marry Lucy, and she willing! How was I to do? what was I to say?—how could I refuse him when I was willing? how could I say 'yes,' when Betsy said 'no!'

"Well, in the midst of this thinking, what should I hear but a loud cry from the child, then a loud yell,—a regular war-whoop,—sounded right in front, as if it came from Lenatewá himself. I looked up quickly, for, in thinking, I had lost sight of them, and was only looking at my rifle; I looked out, and there, in the twinkle of an eye, there was another sight. I saw my daughter flat upon the ground, lying like one dead, and Lenatewá staggering back as if he was mortally hurt; while, pressing fast upon him, was an Indian warrior, with his tomahawk uplifted, and striking—once, twice, three times—hard and heavy, right upon the face and forehead of the young prince. From the black paint on his face, and the red ring about his eyes, and from his figure and the eagle feathers in his head, I soon guessed it was Oloschottee,

and I then knew it was the old revenge for the killing of his father; for an Indian never forgets that sort of obligation. Of course, I didn't stand quiet to see an old friend, like Lenatewá, tumbled in that way, without warning, like a bullock; and there was my own daughter lying flat, and I wasn't to know that he hadn't struck her too. It was only one motion for me to draw sight upon the savage, and another to pull trigger; and I reckon he dropped jest as soon as the young Chief. I gave one whoop for all the world as if I was an Indian myself, and run out to the spot; but Lenatewá had got his discharge from further service. He warn't exactly dead, but his sense was swimming. He couldn't say much, and that warn't at all to the purpose. I could hear him, now and then, making a sort of singing noise, but that was soon swallowed up in a gurgle and a gasp, and it was all over. My bullet was quicker in its working than Oloschottee's hatchet; he was stone dead before I got to him. As for poor Lucy, she was not hurt, either by bullet or hatchet; but she had a hurt in the heart, whether from the scare she had, or because she had more feeling for the young prince than we reckoned, there's no telling. She warn't much given to smiling after that. But, whether she loved Lenatewá, we couldn't know, and I never was the man to ask her. It's sartain she never married, and she had about as many chances, and good ones, too, as any girl in our settlement. You've seen her—some among you—and warn't she a beauty—though I say it myself—the very flower of the forest!"

THE LAST WAGER,

OR THE GAMESTER OF THE MISSISSIPPI.

"I have set my life upon a cast,
And I will stand the hazard of the die."

SHAKSPEARE.

CHAPTER I.

Our story will be found to illustrate one of the current commonplaces of the day. Ever since my Lord Byron, in that poem of excellently expressed commonplaces, Don Juan, declared that "truth was stranger than fiction," every newspaper witling rings the changes upon the theme, until there is no relief to its dull-toned dissonance. That truth should frequently be found to be much stranger than any fiction, is neither so strange nor out of the course of things; but is just in accordance, if we bestow any thought upon the matter, with the deliberate convictions of every reasoning mind. For, what is fiction, but the nice adaptation, by an artist, of certain ordinary occurrences in life, to a natural and probable conclusion? It is not the policy of a good artist to deal much in the merely extravagant. His real success, and the true secret of it, is to be found in the *naturalness* of his story, its general seemliness, and the close resemblance of its events to those which may or must take place in all instances of individuals subjected to like influences with those who figure in his narrative. The naturalness must be that of life as it is, or with life as it is shown in such picturesque situations as are probable—seemingly real—and such as harmonize equally with the laws of nature, and such as the artist has chosen for his guide. Except in stories of broad extravagance—ghost stories for example—in which

the one purpose of the romancer—that of exciting wonder—is declared at the outset—except in such stories, or in others of the broad grin—such as are common and extravagant enough among the frontier *raconteurs* of the West, it were the very worst policy in the world for a writer of fiction to deal much in the marvellous. He would soon wear out the patience of the reader, who would turn away, with a dissatisfaction almost amounting to disgust, from any author who should be found too frequently to employ what is merely possible in human progress. We require as close reasoning, and deductions as logically drawn, in tale and novel, as in a case at law or in equity; much more close, indeed, than is often found to be the case in a Congressional harangue, and a far more tenacious regard to the *interest* of the reader than is shown in the report of a modern secretary. Probability, unstrained, must be made apparent at every step; and if the merely possible be used at all, it must be so used only, as, in looking like the probable, it is made to lose all its ambiguous characteristics. What we show must not only be the truth, but it must also seem like the truth; for, as the skill of the artist can sometimes enable him to make what is false appear true, so it is equally the case, that a want of skill may transmute the most unquestionable truth into something that nine persons in ten shall say, when they behold it, "it looks monstrous like a lie!"

That we are not at liberty to use too freely what is merely possible in the material brought before us, is a fact more particularly known to painters, who have often felt the danger of any attempt to paint the sky as it sometimes appears to them. They dread to offend the suspicious incredulity of the cold and unobserving citizen. They see, with equal amazement and delight—but without daring to delineate—those intenser hues and exquisite gradations of light and shadow, those elaborate and graceful shapes of cloud, born of the rainbow—carnation, green and purple, which the sun sometimes, in fantastic mood, and as if in equal mockery of human faith and art, makes upon the lovely background of the sky which he leaves at setting. The beautiful vision gone from sight, who would believe the poor artist, whatever his accuracy and felicity of touch and taste, who had endeavoured to transfer, before it faded, the vanishing glory to his canvass? Who could suppose,

and how admit, that there had ever been such a panorama, of such super-artistical splendour, displayed before his eyes, without commanding his admiration and fixing his attention? The very attempt to impose such an exhibition upon him as natural, would be something of a sarcasm, and a commentary upon the dull eye and drowsy mind which had failed to discern it for themselves. Nay, though the artist grappled the dull citizen by the arm at the very instant, and compelled his gaze upon the glorious vision ere it melted into the thin gray haze of evening, would he not be apt to say, "How strange! how very unnatural!" Certainly, it would be a nature and a truth infinitely more strange than the most audacious fiction that ever grew up at the touch of the most fantastic votary of art.

CHAPTER II.

THE sketch which I propose will scarcely justify this long digression; and its character will be still less likely to correspond with the somewhat poetic texture of the introduction. It is simply a strange narrative of frontier life; one of those narratives in which a fact will appear very doubtful, unless the artist shall exhibit such sufficient skill in his elaborations, as to keep its rude points from offending too greatly the suspicious judgment of the reader. This is the task before me. The circumstances were picked up, when, a lad of eighteen, I first wandered over the then dreary and dangerous wastes of the Mississippi border. Noble, indeed, though wild and savage, was the aspect of that green forest country, as yet only slightly smitten by the sharp edges of the ranger's axe. I travelled along the great Yazoo wilderness, in frequent proximity with the Choctaw warriors. Most frequently I rode alone. Sometimes, a wayfarer from the East, solitary with myself, turned his horse's head, for a few days' space, on the same track with mine; but, in most cases, my only companion was some sullen Choctaw, or some still more sullen half-breed, who, emerging suddenly from some little foot-path, would leave me half in doubt whether his introduction would be made first with the tomahawk or the tongue. Very few white men were then settled in the country; still fewer were stationary. I rode forty and fifty miles without sign of human habitation, and found my bed and supper at night most generally in the cabin of the half-breed. But there was one, and that a remarkable exception to this universal necessity; and in this exception my story takes its rise. I had at length reached the borders of the nation, and the turbid waters of the Mississippi, at no great distance, flowed down towards the Gulf. The appearances of the white settler, some doubtful glimmerings of a more civilized region, were beginning to display themselves. Evening was at hand. The sun was fast waning along the mellow heights of heaven; and my heart was begin-

ning to sink with the natural sense of loneliness which such a setting is apt to inspire in the bosom of the youthful wanderer. It was also a question with me, where I should find my pillow for the night. My host of the night before, a low, dark-looking white squatter, either was, or professed to be, too ignorant to give me any information on this head, which would render the matter one of reasonable certainty. In this doubtful and somewhat desolate state of mind, I began to prick my steed forward at a more rapid pace, to cast my eyes up more frequently to the fading light among the tree-tops, and, occasionally, to send a furtive glance on either hand, not altogether assured that my road was as safe as it was lonely. The question "where shall I find my bed to-night?" was beginning to be one of serious uncertainty, when I suddenly caught a glimpse of an opening on my right, a sort of wagon-path, avenue like, and which reminded me of those dear, dim passages in my own Carolina, which always promised the traveller a hot supper and happy conclusion to his wanderings of the day. Warmed with the notion, and without a farther doubt or thought, I wheeled my sorrel into the passage, and pressed him forward with a keener spur. A cheery blast of the horn ahead, and the dull heavy stroke of an axe immediately after, were so many urgent entreaties to proceed; and now the bellow of a cow, and next the smoke above the cottage roof-trees, assured me that my apprehensions were at an end. In a few seconds I stood before one of the snuggest little habitations which ever kindled hope and satisfied hunger.

This was one of those small log-cabins which are common to the country. Beyond its snug, trim and tidy appearance, there was nothing about it to distinguish it from its class. The clearing was small, just sufficient, perhaps, for a full supply of corn and provisions. But the area in front of the dwelling was cleanly swept, and the trees were trimmed, and those which had been left were evergreens, and so like favourite domestics, with such an air of grace, and good-nature, and venerableness about them, that one's heart warmed to see them, as at sight of one of "the old familiar faces." The aspect of the dwelling within consisted happily with that without. Every thing was so neat, and snug, and comfortable.

The windows were sashed and glassed, and hung with the whitest curtains of cotton, with fringes fully a foot deep. The floors were neatly sanded, the hearth was freshly brightened with the red ochrous clay of the country, and chairs and tables, though made of the plainest stuffs, and by a very rude mechanic, were yet so clean, neat and well-arranged, that the eye involuntarily surveyed them again and again with a very pleased sensation. Nor was this all in the shape of unwonted comforts. Some other matters were considered in this cottage, which are scarcely even dreamed of in the great majority. In one corner of the hall stood a hat-stand; in another there were pins for cloaks; above the fire-place hung a formidable rifle, suspended upon tenter-hooks made of three monstrous antlers, probably those of gigantic bucks which had fallen beneath the weapon which they were now made to sustain. Directly under this instrument, and the only object beside which had been honoured with a place so conspicuous, *was a pack of ordinary playing cards*—not hung or suspended against the wall, *but nailed to it;*—driven through and through with a tenpenny nail, and so fastened to the solid log, the black head of the nail showing with particular prominence in contrast with the red spot of the ace of hearts, through which it had been driven. Of this hereafter. On this pack of cards hangs my story. It is enough, in this place, to add, that it was only after supper was fairly over, that my eyes were drawn to this very unusual sort of chimney decoration.

At the door of the cottage sat a very venerable old man, between seventy and eighty. His hair was all white, but still thick, betraying the strength of his constitution and the excellence of his health. His skin was florid, glowing through his white beard, which might have been three days old, and his face bore the burden of very few wrinkles. He had a lively, clear blue eye, and good-humour played about his mouth in every movement of his lips. He was evidently one of those fortunate men, whose winters, if frosty, had always proved kindly. A strong man in his youth, he was now but little bent with years; and when he stood up, I was quite ashamed to find he was rather more erect than myself, and quite as tall. This was the patriarch of the family, which consisted of three members besides himself. The first of

these was his only son, a man thirty-eight or forty years of age, of whom it will be quite explicit enough to say, that the old man, in his youth, must very nearly have resembled him. Then, there was the wife of the son, and her son, a lad now ten years old, a smart-looking lad enough, but in no wise resembling his male parent. Instead of the lively, twinkling blue eye of his father, he had the dark, deep, oriental sad ones of the mother; and his cheeks were rather pale than rosy, rather thin than full; and his hair was long, black and silky, in all respects the counterpart of his mother's. A brief description of this lady may assist us in our effort to awaken the interest of the reader.

Conducted into the house by the son, and warmly welcomed by the old man as well as himself, I was about to advance with the bold dashing self-possession of a young cavalier, confident in his course, and accustomed to win "golden opinions of all sorts of people." But my bold carriage and sanguine temper were suddenly checked, not chilled, by the appearance of the lady in front of whom I suddenly stood. She sat beside the fireplace, and was so very different a looking person from any I had expected to see in such a region, that the usual audacity of my temperament was all at once abashed. In place of the good, cheerful, buxom, plain country housewife whom I looked to see, mending Jacky's breeches, or knitting the good-man's hose, I found myself confronted by a dame whose aristocratic, high-bred, highly composed, easy and placid demeanour, utterly confounded me. Her person was small, her complexion darkly oriental, her eye flashing with all the spiritual fires of that region; habitually bright and searching, even while the expression of her features would have made her seem utterly emotionless. Never did features, indeed, appear so thoroughly inflexible. Her beauty,—for she was all beauty,—was not, however, the result of any regularity of feature. Beauties of her order, brunette and piquant, are most usually wanting in preciseness, and mutual dependance and sympathy of outline. They are beautiful in spite of irregularity, and in consequence of the paramount exquisiteness of some particular feature. The charm of the face before me grew out of the piercing, deep-set, and singularly black eye, and the wonderful vitality about the lips. Never was mouth so small, or so admirably delineated. There was

witchcraft enough in the web of it to make my own lips water. But I speak like the boy I was then, and am no longer.

Let me not be understood to mean that there was any levity, any lightness of character betrayed in the expression of those lips. Very far otherwise. While soft, sweet, beautiful, and full of life, they were the most sacred and sad-looking forms,—drooping blossoms of beauty, mourning, as it would seem, because beauty does not imply immortality; and this expression led me to observe more closely the character of the eye, the glance of which, at first, had only seemed to denote the brilliance of the diamond, shining through an atmosphere of jet. I now discerned that its intense blaze was not its only character. It was marked with the weight of tears, that, freezing as they had birth, maintained their place in defiance of the light to which they were constantly exposed. It was the brightness of the ice palace, in the Northern Saga, which, in reflecting the bright glances of Balder, the God of Day, still gives defiance to the fervour of his beams.

But a truce to these frigid comparisons, which suit any age but ours. Enough to say that the lady was of a rare and singular beauty, with a character of face and feature not common to our country, and with a deportment seldom found in the homely cabin of the woodman or the squatter. The deep and unequivocal sadness which marked her looks, intense as it was, did not affect or impair the heightened aristocratic dignity of her subdued and perfectly assured manner. To this manner did she seem to have been born; and, being habitual, it is easy to understand that she could not be divested of it, except in a very small degree, by the pressure of any form of affliction. You could see that there had been affliction, but its effect was simply to confirm that elevated social tone, familiar to all mental superiority, which seems, however it may feel, to regard the confession of its griefs as perhaps something too merely human to be altogether becoming in a confessedly superior caste. Whether the stream was only frozen over, or most effectually crystallized, it does not suit our purpose to inquire. It is, at all events, beyond my present ability to determine the doubt.

She was introduced to me, by the husband, as Mrs. Rayner. I afterwards discovered that her Christian name was Rachel; a

circumstance that tended to strengthen the impression in my mind that she might be of Jewish parents. That she was a Christian herself, I had reason to believe, from her joining freely and devoutly, and on bended knee, in the devotions of the night. She spoke seldom, yet looked intelligence throughout the conversation, which was carried on freely between the old man, the husband, and myself. When she spoke, her words and accents were marked by the most singular propriety. There was nothing in her utterance to lessen the conviction that she was familiar with the most select circles of city life; and I could see that the husband listened to her with a marked deference, and, though himself, evidently, a rough honest backwoodsman, I detected him, in one or two instances, checking the rude phrase upon his lips, and substituting for it some other, more natural to the ear of civilization and society. There was a touching something in the meekness and quiet deportment of the boy who sat by his mother's knee in silence, her fingers turning in his hair, while he diligently pored over some little trophy of juvenile literature, looking up timidly at moments, and smiling sadly, when he met the deep earnest gaze of the mother's eyes, as she seemed to forget all around in the glance at the one object. I need not say that there was something in this family picture so entirely out of the common run of my woodland experience in the Southwest, at that early day, that I felt my curiosity equally excited with my pleasure. I felt assured that there was something of a story to be learned, which would amply recompense the listener. The old patriarch was himself a study—the husband a very noble specimen of the sturdy, frank, elastic frontier-man—a race too often confounded with the miserable runagates by whom the first explorations of the country are begun, but who seldom make the real axe-marks of the wilderness. You could see at a glance that he was just the man whom a friend could rely upon and a foe most fear—frank, ardent, firm, resolute in endurance, patient, perhaps, and slow to anger, as are all noble-minded persons who have a just confidence in their own strength; but unyielding when the field is to be fought, and as cheerful in the moment of danger as he was good-humoured in that of peace. Every thing in his look, language and bearing, answered to this descrip-

tion; and I sat down at the supper table beside him that night, as familiar and as much at my ease as if we had jumped together from the first moment of existence.

I pass over much of the conversation preceding, and at the evening repast; for, though interesting enough at the time, particularly to me, it would only delay us still longer in the approach to our story. It was after the table had been withdrawn, when the family were all snugly huddled about the fireplace, and the dialogue, which had been rather brisk before, had begun to flag, that I casually looked up over the chimney-place, and discovered, for the first time, the singular ornament of which I have already spoken. Doubtful of what I saw, I rose to my feet, and grasped the object with my fingers. I fancied that some eccentric forest genius, choosing for his subject one of the great agents of popular pastime in the West, might have succeeded in a delineation sufficiently felicitous, as, at a short distance, to baffle any vision. But, palpable, the real—I had almost said, the living—things were there, unlike the dagger of Macbeth, as "sensible to feeling as to sight." A complete pack of cards, none of the cleanest, driven through with a tenpenny nail, the ace of hearts, as before said, being the top card, and very fairly covering the retinue of its own and the three rival houses. The corners of the cards were curled, and the ends smoked to partial blackness. They had evidently been in that situation for several years. I turned inquiringly to my hosts—

"You have a very singular ornament for your mantleplace, Mr. Rayner;" was my natural remark, the expression of curiosity in my face being coupled with an apologetic sort of smile. But it met with no answering smiles from any of the family. On the contrary, every face was grave to sadness, and in a moment more Mrs. Rayner rose and left the room. As soon as she was gone, her husband remarked as follows:

"Why, yes, sir, it is uncommon; but there's a reason why it's there, which I'll explain to you after we've gone through prayers."

By this time the wife had returned, bringing with her the family Bible, which she now laid upon a stand beside the venerable elder. He, good old man, with an action that seemed to be per-

fectly habitual, drew forth the spectacles from the sacred pages, where they seemed to have been left from the previous evening, and commenced reading the third chapter of Ecclesiastes, beginning, "Hear me, your father, O children! and do thereafter, that ye may be safe." Then, this being read, we all sunk devoutly upon our knees, and the patriarch put up as sweet and fervent a prayer as I should ever wish to listen to. The conceited whipster of the school might have found his pronunciation vulgar, and his sentences sometimes deficient in grammatical nicety; but the *thought* was there, and the *heart*, and the ears of perfect wisdom might well be satisfied with the good sense and the true morality of all that was spoken. We rose refreshed, and, after a lapse of a very few moments which were passed in silence, the wife, leading the little boy by the hand, with a kind nod and courtesy took her leave, and retired to her chamber. Sweetness and dignity were most happily blended in her parting movements; but I fancied, as I caught the glance of her eye, that there had been a freshening and overflowing there of the deep and still gathering fountains. Her departure was followed by that of the old man, and the husband and myself were left alone. It was not long after this, before he, himself, without waiting for any suggestion of mine, brought up the subject of the cards, which had been so conspicuously elevated into a mantel ornament.

CHAPTER III.

"STRANGER," said he, "there is a sort of history in those cards which I am always happy to tell to any young man that's a beginner in the world like yourself. I consider them as a sort of Bible, for, when I look at them and remember all that I know concerning them, I feel as if I was listening to some prime sermon, or may be, hearing just such a chapter as the old man read to us out of the good book to-night. It's quite a long history, and I'll put on a fresh handful of lightwood before I begin."

The interruption was brief, and soon overcome, and the narrative of the husband ran as follows:

"It is now," said he, "going on to twelve years since the circumstances took place which belong to the story of those cards, and I will have to carry you back to that time before you can have a right knowledge of what I want to tell. I was then pretty much such a looking person as you now see me, for I haven't undergone much change. I was a little sprightlier, perhaps—always famous for light-headedness and laughing—fond of fun and frolic, but never doing any thing out of mischief and bad humour. The old man, my father, too, was pretty much the same. We lived here where you find us now, but not quite so snugly off—not so well settled—rather poor, I may say, though still with a plentiful supply to live on and keep warm and feel lively. There was only us two, and we had but two workers, a man and woman, and they had two children, who could do nothing for us and precious little for themselves. But we were snug, and worked steadily, and were comfortable. We didn't make much money, but we always spent less than we made. We didn't have very nice food, but we had no physic to take, and no doctor's bills to pay. We had a great deal to make us happy, and still more to be thankful for; and I trust in God we were thankful for all of his blessings. I think we were, for he gave us other blessings; and for these, stranger, we are trying to be thankful also.

"Well, as I was saying, about twelve years ago, one hot day in August, I rode out a little piece towards the river bluff to see if any goods had been left for us at the landing. We had heard the steamboat gun the night before, or something like it, and that, you know, is the signal to tell us when to look after our *plunder*. When I got there I found a lot of things, some for us, and some for other people. There was a bag of coffee, a keg of sugar, three sacks of salt, and a box of odds and ends for us. But the chaps on board the steamboat—which was gone—had thrown down the stuff any where, and some of the salt was half melted in a puddle of water. I turned in, and hauled it out of the water, and piled it up in a dry place. What was wet belonged chiefly to our neighbours, and the whole of it might have been lost if I had not got there in season. This kept me a good hour, and as I had no help, and some of the sacks were large and heavy, I was pretty nigh tired out when the work was done. So I took a rest of half an hour more in the shade. The heat was powerful, and I had pretty nigh been caught by sleep—I don't know but I did sleep, for in midsummer one's not always sure of himself in a drowsy moment—when I was suddenly roused up by a noise most like the halloo of a person in distress. I took the saddle on the spur, and went off in the quarter that the sound came from. It so happened that my route homeward lay the same way, and on the river road, the only public road in the settlement; and I had only gone two hundred yards or thereabout, when, in turning an elbow of the path, I came plump upon a stranger, who happened to be the person whom I heard calling. He was most certainly in distress. His horse was flat upon his side, groaning powerfully, and the man was on his knees, rubbing the creature's legs with a pretty hard hand. A little way behind him lay a dead rattlesnake, one of the largest I ever did see, counting twenty-one rattles besides the button; and the sight of the snake told me the whole story. I jumped down to see what I could do in the way of help, but I soon discovered that the nag had the spasms, and was swelled up to her loins. I however cut into her leg with my knife, just where she was bitten, and when I had dug out the poisoned flesh, as much as I thought was reasonable, I got on my horse and rode back to the salt bags at full

speed, and brought away a double handful of the salt. I rubbed it into the animal's wound, I really believe, a few minutes after she had groaned her last and stiffened out, but I wasn't rubbing very long. She was about the soonest killed of any creature that I ever saw snakebit before.

"It was only after I was done with the mare, that I got a fair look at her owner. He was a small and rather oldish man, with a great stoop of the shoulders, with a thin face, glossy black hair, and eyes black too, but shining as bright, I reckon, as those of the rattlesnake he had killed. They had a most strange and troublesome brightness, that made me look at them whether I would or not. His face was very pale, and the wrinkles were deep, like so many seams, and, as I have said, he was what I would call a rather oldish man; but still he was very nicely dressed, and wore a span-new velvet vest, a real English broadcloth coat, gold watch with gold seals; and every now and then he pulled out a snuff-box made like a horn, with a curl at the end of it, which was also set with a gold rim, and had a cap of the same precious stuff upon it. He was taking snuff every moment while I was doctoring his mare, and when the creature went dead, he offered it to me; but I had always thought it work enough to feed my mouth, and had no notion of making another mouth of my nose, so I refused him civilly.

"He didn't seem to be much worried by the death of his creature, and when I told him how sorry I was on his account, he answered quickly,

"'Oh! no matter; you have a good horse; you will let me have him; you look like a good fellow.'

"I was a little surprised, you may reckon. I looked at the old man, and then at my creature. He *was* a good creature; and as prime an animal as ever stepped in traces; good at any thing, plough, wagon, or saddle; as easy-going as a girl of sixteen, and not half so skittish. I had no notion of giving him up to a stranger, you may be sure, and didn't half like the cool, easy, impudent manner with which the old man spoke to me. I had no fears—I didn't think of his taking my nag from me by force—but, of a sudden, I almost begun to think he might be a wizard, as we read in Scripture, and hear of from the old people, or

mou't be, the old devil himself, and then I did'nt well know what I had to expect. But he soon made the matter clear to me. Perhaps he saw that I was a little beflustered.

"'Young man,' says he, 'your horse *is* a fine one. Will you sell him? I am willing to pay you a fair price—give you his full value.'

"There was something to consider in that. When did you ever find a Western man unwilling for a horse-barter? Besides, though the creature was a really first-rate nag, he was one more than I wanted. One for the plough, and one for the saddle—as the old man didn't ride often—was enough for us; and we had three. But Rainbow—that was his name—was so sleek an animal! He could a'most do any thing that you'd tell him. I did'nt want to sell him, but I didn't want to keep a mouth too many. You know a horse that you don't want begins by gnawing through your pockets, and ends by eating off his own head. That's the say, at least. But I raised Rainbow, fed him with my own hands, curried him night and morning myself, and looked upon him as a sort of younger brother. I hated powerful bad to part with him; but then there was no reason to keep him when he was of no use. 'Twas a satisfaction, to be sure, to have such a creature; and 'twas a pleasure to cross him, and streak it away, at a brushing canter, of a bright morning, for a good five miles at a stretch; but poor people can't afford such pleasures and satisfactions; and when I thought of the new wagon that we wanted, and such a smart chance of other things about the farm, I looked at the old man and thought better of his offer. I said to him, though a little slowly,

"'It's a famous fine horse this, stranger.'

"'I know it,' said he; 'I never saw one that better pleased my eyes. I'll pay you a famous fine price for him.'

"'What'll you give?' said I.

"'Pshaw!' said he, 'speak out like a man. I'm no baby, and you are old enough to know better. What's your price?'

"'He's low,' said I, 'at one hundred and seventy dollars.'

"'He is,' said he, 'he's worth more—will you take that?'

"'Yes.'

"'We'll play for that twenty dollars,' said he, throwing down two gold pieces on the body of the dead mare, and beginning to shuffle the cards immediately. Somehow, I did as he did. I put down two ten dollar pieces along with his. I couldn't help myself. He seemed to command me. I felt scared—I felt that I was doing wrong; but he seemed to take every thing so much as a matter of course, that I hadn't the courage to say 'no' to any thing he did or said.

"'What do you play?' said he, and he named some twenty games of cards, some in French, I believe, and some in Spanish, but no one of which did I know any thing about. He seemed beflustered.

"'Do you play any thing at all?' he asked.

"'Yes—a little of *old sledge*—that's all.'

"'Oh! that will do. A common game enough. I wonder I should have omitted it. Here! you may shuffle them, and we'll cut for deal.'

"I didn't shuffle, but cut at once. He cut after me, and the deal fell to him. He took up and then put the cards down again—put his hand into his pocket, and drew out a little silver box, about the size of a small snuff-box,—that had in it a good many little pills of a dark gray gummy look. One of these he swallowed, then began to deal, his eye growing brighter every moment, and looking into mine till I felt quite dazzled and strange. Our table was the belly of the dead horse. He sat on one of the thighs. I knelt down upon the grass on the opposite side, and though it pained me, I couldn't take my eyes from him to save my life. He asked me a great many questions while he was throwing out the cards—how old I was—what was my name—what family I had—how far I lived—where I came from—every thing, indeed, about me, and my way of life, and what I had and what I knew:—and all this in no time—as fast as I tell it to you. Then he said, 'You are an honest fellow, take up your cards, and let us see if you are as lucky as you are honest.' It seemed as if I was, for I beat him. I played a pretty stiff game of *old sledge*, or as he called it, '*all fours*,' for I used to play, as long as I could remember, with the old man, my father, every night. *Old people* like these plays, and it's good for them to play. It

keeps 'em lively, keeps them from sleeping too much, and from drinking. It's good for them, so long as it makes their own fireside sweet to them. Well! I was lucky. I won the game, and it worried me mightily when I did so. I didn't touch the money.

"'I suppose,' said the stranger, 'that I must cover those pieces,' and before I could guess what he was about, he flung down four other gold pieces, making forty dollars, in the pile with mine, and began again shuffling the cards. If I was scared and unhappy before, I was twice as much so now. I could scarcely breathe, and why, I can't say exactly. It wasn't from any anxiety about the winning or the losing, for I preferred not to have the stranger's money: but it was his very indifference and unconcern that worried and distressed me. It seemed so unnatural, that I half the time thought that I was dealing with nothing human: and though I could shuffle, and cut, and play, yet it seemed to me as if I did it without altogether knowing why, or how. As luck would have it, I won the second time; and the third time he pulled out his purse and put down as many more pieces as lay there. I looked at the growing heap with a heart that seemed ready to burst. There was eighty dollars before me, and I felt my face grow red when I caught his eye looking steadily at mine. I began to feel sort o' desperate, and flung about the cards like a person in liquor. The old man laughed, a low chuckle like, that made my blood crawl in my veins, half frozen, as it were. But, neither his skill and coolness, nor my fright, altered the luck at all. I again won, and trembled all over, to see the pile, and to see him take out his purse, and empty every thing upon it.

"'Stranger,' said I, 'don't think of it; keep your money, and let me go home.'

"'Pshaw! said he, 'you're a good fellow, and as lucky as you are good. Why shouldn't you be my heir? I prefer that a good fellow should win my money if any body. It'll do your sight good.'

"'But not my heart, I'm afraid,' was my answer.

"'That's precisely as you use it,' said he; 'money's a good creature, like every other good creature that God gives us. It's a good thing to be rich, for a rich man's always able to do good,

when a poor man can only wish to do it. Get money, my lad, and be wise with it; wiser, I trust, than I have been.'

"With these words, he took out his silver box, swallowed another of the pills, and was busy dealing out the cards in another moment. I, somehow, was better pleased with him for what he said. The mention of God convinced me that he wasn't the devil, and what he said seemed very sensible. But I didn't feel any more right and happy than before. I only wanted the strength to refuse him. I couldn't refuse him. I took up the cards as he threw them, and it did seem to me that I scarcely saw to make out the spots when I played them. I hardly knew how the game was played; I didn't count; I couldn't tell what I made. I only heard him say at the close of the second hand,

"'The money's yours. You are a lucky fellow.'

"With these words he pushed the gold heap to me, and threw me the empty purse.

"'There's something to put it in.'

"'No!' said I; 'no, stranger—I can't take this money.'

"'Why, pray?'

"'It's not right. It don't seem to me to be got honestly. I haven't worked for it.'

"'Worked, indeed! If nobody used money but those who worked for it, many a precious fellow would gnaw his finger ends for a dinner. Put up your money!'

"I pushed it to him, all but the two eagles which I begun with; but he pushed it back. I got up without touching it. 'Stay,' said he, 'you *are* a good fellow! Sit down again; sit down.' I sat down. 'I can't take that money,' said he, 'for it is yours. According to my way of thinking, it is yours—it is none of mine. There is only one way in which it may become mine; only one way in which I could take it or make use of it, and that is by winning it back. That may be done. I will put the horse against the gold.'

CHAPTER V.

My heart beat quicker than ever when he pointed to Rainbow. Not that I expected or wished to win him back, for I would only have taken him back by giving up all the money, or all except the hundred and fifty dollars; but it now seemed to me as if I looked on the old man with such feelings as would have made me consent to almost any thing he wished. I had a strange sort of pity for him. I considered him a sort of kind-hearted, rich old madman. I said, 'Very well;' and he took another pill out of his box, and begun again at the cards.

"'You are a very fortunate fellow,' said he, 'and seem a very good one. I really see no reason why you should not be my heir. You say you are not married.'

"'No.'

"'But you have your sweetheart, I suppose. A lad of twenty-five, which I suppose is much about your age, is seldom without one.'

"'It's not the case with me,' said I. 'In these parts we have mighty few folks and fewer women, and I don't know the girl among them that's ever seemed to me exactly the one that I should be willing to make my wife.'

"'Why, you're not conceited, I hope? You don't think yourself too fine a fellow for a poor girl, do you?'

"'No, by no means, stranger; but there's a sort of liking that one must have before he can think of a wife, and I haven't seen the woman yet to touch me in the right way.'

"'You are hard to please, and properly. Marriage is easier found than lost. A man is too noble an animal to be kept in a mouse-trap. But there *are* women——'

"He stopped short. I waited for him to say something more, but by this time the cards had been distributed, and he was sorting his hand.

"'There are women!' he said again, though as if he was

talking to himself. There he stopt for a minute, then looking up, and fixing his bright eyes upon mine, he continued:

"'Come, Rayner,' said he, good-humouredly. 'The cards are in your hands, and remember to play your best, for that famous fine horse may become your own again. I warn you, I have a good hand. What do you do?'

"'Good or not,' said I, something more boldly, 'I will stand on mine.'

"I had a most excellent hand, being sure of high and low, with a strong leading hand for game.

"'Play then!' he answered; and at the word, I clapped down the ace of hearts, the very ace you see atop of the pack over the chimney now.

"'You *are* a lucky fellow, Rayner,' said he, as he flung down the Jack upon it, the only heart he held in his hand. The game ended; I was owner of horse and money. But I jumped to my feet instantly.

"'Stranger,' said I, 'don't think I'm going to rob you of your horse or money. I don't exactly know why I played with you so long, unless it be because you insisted upon it, and I did'nt wish to disoblige an old gentleman like yourself. Take your money, and give me my horse; or, if you want the horse, leave me the hundred and fifty, which is a fair price for him, and put the rest in your own pocket. I wont't touch a copper more of it.'

"'You *are* a good fellow, Rayner, but, with some persons, younger and rasher persons than myself, your words would be answered with a bullet. Nay, were I the boy I have been, it would be dangerous for you to speak, *even to me*, in such a manner. Among gentlemen, the obligation to pay up what is lost by cards is sacred. The loser *must* deliver, and the winner *must* receive. *There* is your money, and that is your horse again; but I am not yet done with you. As I said before, you *are* a good fellow, and most certainly a lucky one. I like you, though your principles are scarcely fixed yet—not certain! Still, I like you; and there's some chance that you will be my heir yet. A few more trials at the cards must determine that. I suppose you are not unwilling to give me a chance to win back my losses?'

"*I caught at the suggestion.*

"'Surely not,' I replied.

"'Very good,' says he. 'Don't suppose that, because you've emptied my purse, you've cleaned me out quite. I have a diamond ring and a diamond breastpin yet to stake. They are worth something more than your horse and your heap of money. We will place them against your eagles and horse.'

"'No!' said I quickly. 'I'm willing to put down all the eagles, but not the horse; or I'll put down the horse and all the money, except the hundred and fifty.'

"'As you please,' said he, 'but, my good fellow, you must take my word for the ring and breastpin. I do not carry them with me. I know it's rather awkward to talk of playing a promised stake against one that we see, but I give you the honour of a gentleman that the diamonds shall be forthcoming if I lose.'

"I began to think that what he said was only a sort of come-off—but I didn't want his money, and was quite willing that he should win it back. If he had said, 'I'll stake my toothpick against the money,' I'd have been just as willing, for all that I now aimed at was to secure my horse or the price of him. I felt very miserable at the thought of winning the man's money—such a heap of it! I had never played cards for money in all my life before, and there's something in the feeling of winning money, for the first time, that's almost like thieving. As I tell you, if he had said his toothpick, or any worthless thing, instead of his diamonds, I'd have been willing. I didn't say so, however, and I thought his offer to stake diamonds that he couldn't show, was pretty much like a come-off. But I was willing enough, for the money seemed to scald my eyes to look upon. He took out a pencil, the case of which I saw was gold also, and wrote on a slip of paper, 'Good for two brilliants, one a ring, the other a breastpin, the latter in form of a Maltese cross, both set in gold, with an inner rim of silver, valued at seven hundred dollars.' This was signed with two letters only, the initials of his name. I have the paper now. He bade me read it, and when I did so, I thought him madder than a March hare; but if I thought so then, I was more than ever convinced of it, when, a moment after, and when we were about to play, he spoke to this effect:

"'There's one thing, Rayner. There's a little incumbrance on these jewels.'

"'Well, sir,' I said.

"I didn't care a fig for the incumbrance, for I didn't believe a word of the jewels.

"'If you win them, you win a woman along with them. You win a wife.'

"I laughed outright.

"'Don't laugh,' said he; 'you don't see me laugh. I'm serious; never more so. You are unmarried. You need a wife. Don't you want one?'

"'Yes! if I could get a good one—one to my liking.'

"'You *are* a good fellow. You deserve a good wife, Rayner; and such is the very one I propose to give you.'

"'Ay, ay,' said I; 'but will she be to my liking?'

"'I hope so; I believe so. She has all the qualities which should command the liking of a sensible and worthy young man. She, too, is sensible; she is intelligent; she has knowledge; she has read books; she has accomplishments; she sings like an angel; plays on several instruments—piano and guitar!'

"'Piano and guitar!' said I.

"I didn't know what they were. I felt sure that the old fellow was mad, just out of a hospital, perhaps; but then where did he get the money and the gold things? I began to think more suspiciously of him than ever.

"'Yes, piano and guitar,' said he; 'she draws and paints too, the loveliest pictures—she can make these trees live on canvass; ah! can she not? Money has not been spared, Rayner, to make Rachel what she is.'

"'Rachel—is that her name?' I asked.

"'Yes, it is.'

"'What's the other name?'

"'You shall know, if you win the diamonds.'

"'Yes—but how old is she? how does she look? is she young and handsome? I wouldn't want an ugly wife because she happened to be wise. I've heard that your wise women are generally too ugly for any thing else than wisdom.'

"'You are a fool, Rayner, though a good fellow. But Rachel

is beautiful and young—not more than seventeen—the proper age for you. You, I think you say, are twenty-eight. In this climate a man's wife should always be ten or twelve years younger than himself—provided he be a sober and healthy man, and if he be not, he has no business with a wife, nor a wife with him. You are both sober and healthy. You are a good fellow—I see that. I like you, Rayner, and for this reason I am willing to risk Rachel on the cards, playing against you. My loss will probably be her gain, and this makes me rather regardless how it ends. You shall be my heir yet.'

"'Thank you, old gentleman,' said I, beginning to feel a little bold and saucy, for I now couldn't help thinking that the stranger was no better than a good-natured madman who had got away from his friends. 'Thank you,' said I. 'If Rachel's the girl you make her out to be, you can't bring her along a day too soon. But, may I ask, is she your daughter?'

"'My daughter!' he answered sharply, and with something of a frown on his face, 'do I look like a man to have children?—to be favoured with such a blessing as a daughter?—a daughter like Rachel?'

"'Now,' said I to myself, 'his fit's coming on,' and I began to look about me for a start.

"'No, Rayner,' he continued, 'she is no daughter of mine, but she is the daughter of a good man and of honourable parents. You shall have sufficient proof of that. Have you any more questions?'

"'No, sir.'

"'And you will take Rachel as your wife? You have heard my description of her. If she comes up to it, I ask you, will you be willing to take her as your wife?'

"I looked at him queerly enough, I reckon. He fixed his keen black eyes upon me, so that I couldn't look on him without shutting my own. I didn't know whether to laugh or to run. But, thinking that he was flighty in the upper story, I concluded it was best to make a short business of it, and to agree with anything that he wished; so I told him freely 'yes,' and he reached out his hand to mine, which he squeezed nervously for a minute, and then took out his box of pills, swallowed a couple of them,

and began dealing out the cards. I had the strangest luck—the same sort of luck that had kept with me from the start. I won the diamonds and won Rachel!

"'Well,' said he, 'I'm glad, Rayner, that you are the man-I've been long looking for an heir to my diamonds. They are yours—all is yours; and I shall have to be indebted to you for the loan of the horse, in order to go and bring you your wife.'

"'Ay,' said I, 'stranger, the horse is at your service, and half of the money too. I never thought to take them from you at the first; I shouldn't have felt easy in my conscience to have used the money that I got in this way.'

"'Pshaw!' said he, gathering up the cards, and wrapping them in the buckskin wallet from which he had taken them. 'Pshaw, you are a fool. I'll borrow your horse, and a few pieces to pay my way.'

"'Help yourself to the rest,' said I, taking, as I spoke, fifteen of the eagles to myself, and leaving the rest on the dead body of the horse, where they had been growing from our first commencing to play.

"'You are my heir,' he answered, 'and behave yourself as you should. Between persons so related there should be no paltry money scruples;' and, while he said these words, he stooped to take the money. I turned away that he shouldn't suppose I watched him, but I couldn't help laughing at the strange sort of cunning which he showed in his conceit. Says I to myself, 'You will take precious good care, old fellow, I see that, that I carry off no more than my own poor hundred and fifty.' But he was too quick in mounting and riding off to give me much time to think about it or to change in my disposition. It was only after he was off, out of sight, and in a full gallop, that, looking round upon the dead horse, I saw the eagles still there, nearly all of them, just as I had heaped them up. He had only taken two of them, just enough, as he said, to bear his necessary expenses.

"I was a little surprised, and was now more sure than ever that the stranger had lost his wits. I gathered up the money, and walked home, mighty slowly, thinking all the way of what had taken place. It seemed more like a strange dream than any thing else. Was there any man? Had I played *old sledge* with a

stranger? I was almost inclined to doubt; but there was the dead horse. I went back to look at it, and when I thrust my hand down into my breeches pocket, I brought it up full of the precious metal; but was it precious metal? I began to tremble at this thought. It might be nothing better than brass or copper, and my horse was gone—gone off at a smart canter. My heart grew chilled within me at this reflection. I felt wild—scared half out of my wits, and instead of regarding the old man as a witless person escaped from his keepers, I now began to consider him a cunning sharper, who had found one more witless than I had fancied him.

CHAPTER VI.

But such reflections, even if well founded, came too late for remedy. The old man was gone beyond present reach, and when I reflected that he had taken two of the gold pieces for his own expenses, I began to feel a little reassured on the subject of their value. When I got home, I told my father of the sale of the horse, and the price, though I took precious good care to say nothing of the gambling. The old man, though he himself had taught me to play cards, was mighty strict against all play for money. I showed him only the fifteen pieces that I got for Rainbow, and the rest I put away quietly, meaning to spend them by degrees upon the farm, as chances offered, so as to prevent him from ever getting at the real truth. I felt myself pretty safe with regard to the strange gentleman. I never counted on his coming back to blow me, though, sometimes, when I wasn't thinking, an odd sort of fear would come over me, and I would feel myself trembling with the notion that, after all, he might return. I had heard of rich people having strange ways of throwing away their money, and taking a liking for poor people like myself; and then, there was a serious earnest about the strange gentleman, in spite of all his curiousnesses, that made me a little apprehensive, whenever the recollection of him came into my head.

"But regular work, day after day, is the best physic for mind and body; and, after three days had gone by, I almost ceased to bother myself with the affair. I passed the time so actively that I didn't think much about any thing. I took a trip down the river, some eighteen miles, to a wheelwright's, and bought a prime two-horse wagon, for ninety-five dollars, which made a considerable hole in the price of Rainbow; and, one thing with another, the week went by almost without giving me time to count if the right number of days was in it. Sunday followed, and then Monday. That Monday I was precious busy. I was always an industrious man—doing something or other—making this, or

mending that. To be doing nothing was always the hardest work for me. But that Monday I out-worked myself, and I was really glad when I saw the sun sink suddenly down behind the woods. I threw down the broad-axe, for I had been hewing out some door-facings for a new corn-crib and fodder-house, and went towards the gallery (piazza) where the old man was sitting, and threw myself, at full-length, along the entrance, just at his feet. I was mighty tired. My jacket was off, my sleeves rolled up, my neck open, and the perspiration standing thick on my breast and forehead. At that very moment, while I was lying in this condition, who should I see ride into the opening, but the strange old gentleman. I knew him at a glance, and my heart jumped up into my mouth as if it was trying to get out of it. Behind him came another person riding upon a pretty little bay filly. Though it was darkening fast, I could make out that this other person was a woman, and I never felt so scared in all my life. I looked up at my father, and he at me. He saw that I was frightened, but he hadn't time to ask me a question, and I shouldn't have had the strength to answer if he had. Up rode the strange old gentleman, and close behind him came the lady. Though I was mightily frightened, I looked curiously at her. I could make out that she was a small and delicate-framed person, but her face was covered with a thick veil. I could see that she carried herself well, sat her horse upright like a sort of queen, and when the old man offered to take her off, yielded herself to him with a slow but graceful stateliness, not unlike that of a young cedar bending to the wind.

"For my part, though I could see this, I was never more confounded in my life. I was completely horror-struck. To see the old gentleman again was a shocking surprise; but that he should really bring the lady that I had won, and that she should catch me in that condition,—my coat off, my breast open, my face covered with dust and perspiration! If the work made me sweat before, this surprise increased it. I got up, and made out to get a few steps towards the strangers. I said something by way of apology for being caught in that shabby fix; but the old gentleman stopped me.

"'Never mind, no apologies, Mr. Rayner. The proofs of

labour are always honourable, and if the heart can show that it works as well as the body, then the labourer is a gentleman. How are you, and—this is your father?'

"I introduced him to the old man as the person who had bought Rainbow, and we conducted them into the house.

"'My ward, Mr. Rayner,' said the stranger, when we had entered, 'this is the young friend of whom I spoke to you.'

"At these words the young lady threw up her veil. I staggered back at the sight. I won't talk of her beauty, my friend, for two reasons; one of which is, that I haven't got words to say what I thought and felt—what I think and feel now. The other—but I needn't speak of the other reason. This one is sufficient. The old gentleman looked at me inquiringly, and then he looked at my father. I could see that there was a little doubt and anxiety upon his face, but they soon passed away as he examined the face of my father. There was something so good, so meek, so benevolent about the looks of the old man, that nobody could mistrust that all was right in the bottom of his heart. As for my heart, the strange gentleman seemed to see into it quite as quickly as into that of my father. He was not so blunt and abrupt now in his manner of speaking to me as he had been when we first met. His manner was more dignified and reserved. There was something very lofty and noble about it, and in speaking to the lady his voice sunk almost into a whisper.

"'Mr. Rayner,' said he, looking to my father, 'I trust that you will give my ward a chamber for the night. I have heard of you, sir, and have made bold to presume on your known benevolence of character in making this application.'

"'Our home is a poor one, stranger,' said the old man; 'but such as it is, it is quite at the service of the young lady.'

"'Good!' said the other; 'you are the man after my own heart. I am known,' he continued, 'where men speak of me at all, as Mr. Eckhardt. My ward is the daughter of a very near and dear friend. Her name is Herder—Rachel Herder. So much is necessary for convenience in conversation; and now, sir, if you can tell Rachel where she is to find her chamber, so that she may arrange her dress, and get rid of the dust of travel, she will be very much obliged to you.'

"All this was soon arranged and attended to, and while the lady disappeared in our best chamber, Mr. Eckhardt proceeded to disburthen the horses, on both of which were saddle-bags that were stuffed almost to bursting. These were brought into the house, and sent to the chamber after the lady. Then the stranger sat down with my father, the two old men chatting quite briskly together, while I stripped the horses of their saddles, and took them to the stable. When I returned to the house I found them as free-spoken and good-humoured as if they had been intimate from the first day of clearing in that country.

CHAPTER VII.

"You may suppose what my confusion must have been, for I can't describe it to you. I can only say that I felt pretty much like a drunken man. Every thing swum around me. I was certain of nothing; didn't know what to believe, and half the time really doubted whether I was asleep or awake. But there were the horses—there was Rainbow. I couldn't mistake him, and if I had, he didn't mistake me. When he heard my voice as I led him to the stable, he whinnied with a sort of joy, and pricked up his ears, and showed his feeling as plainly as if he had a human voice to speak it in words. And I reckon, too, it was a more true feeling than many of those that are spoken in words. I threw my arms round the good creature's neck, and if it hadn't been for thinking of Rachel Herder, I reckon I should have kissed him, too, it did me so much good to see him again. But I hadn't much time for this sort of fondness, and when I remembered the whole affair between the strange old gentleman, Mr. Eckhardt, and myself, I was too much worried to think any more of Rainbow. I couldn't bring myself to believe it true about the diamonds and the wife; and when I remembered the sight that I had caught, though a glimpse only, and for a single moment, of the great beauty of the young lady, I couldn't help thinking that the stranger was only making merry with me—running his rigs upon a poor, rough, backwoodsman. But this notion roused up my pride and feeling. 'Not so rough,' says I to myself; 'poor it may be, but not mean; not more rough than honest labour makes a man. And poor as you please, and rough as you please, when the heart's right, and the head's no fool's head, the man's man enough for any woman, though she walks in satin!' With this I considered that I ought, at least, to make myself rather decent before I sat down to supper. My cheeks burned me when I looked at myself and remembered how she had caught me. I *knew that* good soft spring water, and my best suit, would turn

me into quite another sort of looking man; but here again was difficulty. It was my chamber which my father had given up to the young lady, and all my clothes were in it. My new coat and blue pantaloons hung upon pegs behind the door; and all my shirts were in an old chest of drawers on which the looking-glass stood; and to get these things without her seeing was impossible. But it had to be done; so I called up the old negro woman servant we had, and told her what to do, and sent her for the clothes, while I waited for them at the back of the house. When she brought them, I hurried down to the branch (brooklet) and made a rapid and plentiful use of the waters. I then got in among the bushes, and made a thorough change in my dress, taking care to hide the old clothes in the hollow of a gum. I combed my hair smoothly over the branch, which answered me at the same time for a looking-glass, and had the effect of making me much more satisfied with my personal appearance. I needn't blush, my friend, at my time of life, to say that I thought myself then, and was, a tolerable comely fellow; and I couldn't help feeling a sneaking secret notion that the young lady would think so too. Well, I got in time enough for supper. Mr. Eckhardt looked at me, as I thought, with real satisfaction. He and my father had been keeping company all the time I was gone, and I could see, among other things, that they were mightily pleased with one another. By and by, supper was brought in, and Rachel Herder came out of her chamber. If I thought her beautiful before, I thought her now ten times more so. Once I caught her eyes fixed upon me, but she turned them away without any flurry or confusion, and I don't think that I saw her look at me in particular once again that night. This worried me, I confess. It seemed to show that she wasn't thinking of me; and, moreover, it seemed to show that Mr. Eckhardt hadn't said a word to her about the business; and this made me more ready to believe that he had only been running his rigs upon me. Yet there was something about his looks and in his words, whenever he spoke to me—something so real, serious, earnest, that I couldn't help believing, after all, that the affair wasn't altogether over. Nor was it, as you will see directly.

"Supper went forward. You know what a country supper is,

out here in Mississippi, so it don't need to tell you that cornbread, and a little eggs and bacon, and a smart bowl of milk, was pretty much the amount of it. The young lady ate precious little; took a little milk, I believe, and a corn biscuit. As for me, I'm very sure I ate still less. My heart was too much in my mouth to suffer me to put in any thing more; for, whichever way I thought of the matter, I was worried half to death. If the old gentleman was serious, it was still a mighty terrifying thing to have a wife so suddenly forced upon a body,—a wife that you never saw before and didn't know any thing about; and if he wasn't serious, it was very hard to lose so lovely a creature, just too after your heart had been tantalized and tempted by the promise that she was all for yourself. As I tell you, my friend, whichever way I could think of it, I was still worried half to death.

"After supper, Mr. Eckhardt asked me to walk out with him; so, leaving the young lady with my father,—who, by the way, had already grown mightily pleased with her,—off we went into the woods. We hadn't gone very far when the old gentleman spoke, pretty abruptly:

"'Well, Rayner, my lad, you've seen the lady whom I intend as your wife. Does she suit you?'

"'Why, sir, you're rather quick. I can answer for her beauty: she's about the beautifullest creature I ever did see, but it's not beauty altogether that makes a good wife, and I ha'n't had time yet to judge whether she'll suit me.'

"'How much time do you want?' said he shortly.

"'Well, I can't say.'

"'Will a week or ten days answer?'

"'That's as it happens,' said I. 'Some men you can understand in an hour, just as if you had been with 'em all your life. I'm pretty much such a person myself,—but with some you can't get on so rapidly. You'll be with them a year, and know just as little of their hearts at the end of it, as you did at the beginning.'

"'Humph! and whose fault will that be but your own? There's an eye to see, Rayner, as well as a thing to be seen. It depends very much upon the seeker whether he shall ever find. But enough. There's no need in this case for much philosophy.

You are easily read, and so is Rachel. A week will answer to make you both acquainted, and I'll leave her with you for that time.'

"'But are you serious?' I asked.

"'Serious! But your question is natural. I am a man of few words, Rayner. You see something in my proceedings which is extraordinary. As the world goes, and acts, and thinks, perhaps it is; but nothing was ever more deliberate or well advised, on my part, than this proceeding. Hear me, lad! this lady is a ward of mine; the daughter of a very dear friend, who gave her to my trust. I swore to do by her as a father. I am anxious to do so; but I am an old man, not long for this world,—an erring man, not always sure of doing right while I am in it. I wish to find the child a protector,—a good man,—a kind man,—a man whom I can trust. This has been my desire for some time. I fancy I have found in you the very person I seek. I am a man to look keenly, judge quickly, and act in the same manner. As you yourself have remarked, you are a person easily understood. I understood you in a little time, and was pleased with what I saw of you. I have chosen you out as the husband of Rachel. She knows nothing yet of my purpose. You, I see, have kept your father in partial ignorance of our adventure. Perhaps you were right in this case, though, as a general rule, such secrecy between two persons placed as you are would have been an error. Well, Rachel shall stay with you a week. I know her so well that I fancy you will in that time become intimate and remain pleased with each other—sufficiently pleased to make the rest easy.'

"There was some more talk between us, as we went toward the house, but this was the substantial part of what was said. Once I made some remark on the strangeness of such a preference shown to me, when in the great cities he might have found so many young men better suited by education for a young lady whom he represented to be so accomplished; but he had his answer for this also; and so quickly uttered, and with such a commanding manner, that, even if I had not been satisfied, I should still have been silenced.

"'Your remark is natural. Half the world, having such a child to dispose of, would have gone to the great city, and have

preferred a fashionable husband. But I know her heart. It is her heart, and not her accomplishments, that I wish to provide for. I want a man, not a dandy,—a frank, noble-hearted citizen, however plain, not a selfish, sophisticated calculator, who looks for a wife through the stock market. Enough, my good fellow; no more words.'

CHAPTER VIII.

"THAT very night Mr. Eckhardt contrived, after the young lady had gone to bed, to let my father know that he would be pleased if his ward could be suffered to remain in his family for a few days, until he should cross the river, in order to look after a man on the west of the Misssisippi, who owed him money. He was unwilling to carry her with him into so very wild a region. He made every thing appear so natural to the old man, that he consented out of hand, just as if it had been the most reasonable arrangement in the world; and it was only after Mr. Eckhardt had set out,—which he did by daylight the next morning,—that my father said to me:

"'It's very strange, William, now I come to think of it, that Mr. Eckhardt should leave the young lady in a family where there's none but men.'

"'But she's just as safe here, father,' said I, 'as if she had fifty of her own sex about her.'

"'That's true enough, William,' said the old man, 'and if the child feels herself at home, why there's nothing amiss. I'm thinking she's about the sweetest-looking creature I ever laid eyes on.'

"I thought so too, but I said nothing, and followed the old man into the house, with my feelings getting more and more strange and worrisome at every moment. I was in the greatest whirl of expectation—my cheeks a-burning,—my heart as cold as ice, and leaping up and down, just as scarily as a rabbit's when he's finding his way through the paling into a garden patch. I felt as if the business now upon my hands was about the most serious and trying I had ever undertaken; and it took all my thinking, I tell you, to bring my courage to the right pitch, so as to steady my eyes while I spoke to the young lady as she came out to the breakfast-table. My father had a message to her from Mr. Eckhardt, telling her of his absence; and though she looked a little

anxious when she heard that he was already gone, she soon seemed to become quiet and at ease in her situation. Indeed, for that matter, she was the most resigned and easy person I ever met in my life. She seemed quite too gentle ever to complain, and I may say now, with some certainty, that, whatever might be her hurts of mind or body, she was the most patient to submit, and the most easy to be pacified, of all human beings.

"Now, if you know any thing of a man of my description, if you're any thing of a judge of human nature, you'll readily understand that, if I was scary and bashful at first, in meeting with a young and beautiful creature like her, and knowing what I did know of what was before me, it didn't take very long for the fright to wear off. The man whose feelings are very quick, gets mightily confused at first, but give him time, don't hurry him, and he'll come to his senses pretty soon, and they'll come to him, and they'll be the sharper and the more steady, from the scare they had at first —you can't scare them in the same manner a second time. Before that day was well out, I could sit down and talk with Rachel, and hear her talk, without growing blind, dumb, and deaf in an instant. Her mildness gave me encouragement, and when I got used to the sound of my own voice, just after hers, I then found out, not only that I had a good deal to say, but that she listened very patiently, and I think was pleased to hear it. I found her so mild, so kind, and encouraging, she seemed to take so much interest in every thing she saw, that I was for showing her every thing. Our cows, the little dairy, the new wagon, even to the fields of corn, cotton, and potatoes, were all subjects of examination one after the other. Then, I could carry her along the hill slopes, through as pretty a grove, too, as you would wish to lay eyes on; and down along just such another, even to the river banks; and we had odd things enough to show, here and there, to keep up the spirits and have something to talk about. These rambles we'd take either in the cool of the morning, or towards sunset in the afternoon; and, sometimes the old man would go along with us—but, as he couldn't go very far at one time, we had pretty much the whole chance to ourselves; and what with talking and walking with Rachel, and thinking about her when I wasn't with her, I did precious little work that week. To short-

en a long story, my friend, I now began to think that there was nothing wrong in my gambling with Mr. Eckhardt, and to agree in his notion that the loser was always bound to pay, and the winner to receive. Before he got back, which he did not until ten days were fully over, I had pretty much concluded that I should find it the most trying business in nature to have to give up my winnings. I don't mean the diamonds; for them I had not seen, and hadn't cared to see; but I mean the incumbrance that came with them, which, by this time, was more than all the gold or diamonds, in my sight, that the whole world could show.

CHAPTER IX.

"I was now as anxious to see Mr. Eckhardt as I had before been afraid of his coming. He overstayed his time a little, being nearer two weeks gone than one. He was a keen-sighted man. His first words, when we were again alone together, were, 'Well, all's right on your part, Rayner. You are a good fellow—I see that you will be my heir. You find that what I said of Rachel is true; and nothing now remains but to see what she will say. Have you been much together?'

"'Pretty often. I reckon I've done little else than look after her since you've been gone.'

"'What! you hav'n't neglected your business, Rayner?' said he, with a smile—'the cows, the horses?'

"'They've had a sort of liberty,' says I.

"'Bad signs for farming, however good for loving. You must change your habits when you are married.'

"'Ah! that's not yet,' said I, with a sigh. 'I'm dub'ous, Mr. Eckhardt, that Miss Rachel won't fancy me so soon as I do her!'

"He looked a little anxious, and didn't answer so quickly as usual, and my heart felt as heavy then as if it was borne down by a thousand pounds of lead. It wasn't much lightened when he answered, with a sort of doubting,—

"'Rachel,' said he, 'has always heeded my counsel. She knows my love for her—she has every confidence in my judgment. You, Rayner, have some of those advantages which young women are apt to admire. You are well made, youthful, manly, and with a masculine grace and beauty which you owe to the hunter life. These are qualities to recommend the young of one sex to the young of the other. You have something more. You are a sensible youth, with a native delicacy of feeling which, more than any thing beside, will be apt to strike Rachel. It struck me. I will not presume to say that you have won either her eye or her heart—the eye of a woman is easy won at all

times, the heart slowly. Perhaps it may be safe to say that hearts are not often won till after marriage. But, at all events, with your personal claims, which I think considerable, and the docility of Rachel, I have hopes that I can bring about an arrangement which, I confess to you, I regard as greatly important to my future purposes. We shall see.'

"At that moment I was quite too full of Rachel and my own hopes, to consider the force of the remark which he last made. I never troubled myself to ask what his purposes might be, beyond the single one which we both had in view. When Mr. Eckhardt met with Rachel, and, indeed, while he spoke with me, I could observe that there was a gravity, like sadness, in his voice and manner, which was not usual with him, or at least had not shown itself in our previous meetings. He hesitated more frequently in what he had to say. His eye was less settled, though even brighter than before; and I noted the fact that he took his pills three times as frequently as ever. Even when he spoke with a show of jesting or playfulness, I noted that there was a real sadness in what he looked, and even something of sadness in what he said, or in his manner of saying it. Nothing but this seriousness of look and manner kept me from thinking that he was playing upon my backwoods ignorance, when he was speaking my own good name and good qualities to my teeth. But when I doubted and began to suspicion that he was running rigs upon me, I had only to look into his face and see that he was talking in the way of downright, matter-of-fact business.

"When he came, Rachel went to him and put her hand in his, but she didn't speak. Nor did he at first. He only bent down and kissed her forehead; and so he stood awhile, holding her hand in his, and talking to my father. It was a sight to see them two. I couldn't stand it. There was something in it, I can't tell you what, that looked so sadful. I went out and wiped the water from my eyes. It seemed to me then, as if the old gentleman was meditating something very distressing, and as if poor Rachel was half dub'ous of it herself. After a little while, my father came out and joined me, and we walked off together to the stable.

"'William,' says the old man, 'these are strange people.

They seem very sweet, good people; at least the girl seems very good, and is a very sweet girl; but there's something very strange and very sorrowful about them.'

"I couldn't say any thing, for my heart was very full, and the old man went forward.

"'Now, what's more strange than for him to leave her here with us? though, to be sure, we wouldn't see her harmed even to the falling of a hair of her head—and I can answer for you, Bill, as I can for myself; but it's not every body that will say for us what we might feel for ourselves, and precious few fathers would leave an only daughter here, in strange woods, with such perfect strangers.'

"'But she's not his daughter,' said I.

"'It don't matter. It's very clear that he loves her as if she was his daughter, and I reckon she's never known any other father. Poor girl!—I'm sure I like her already so much that I wish he'd leave her here altogether.'

"These last words of my father seemed to untie my tongue, and I up and told him every syllable of what had taken place between me and Mr. Eckhardt, from my first meeting with him the day when I went to the river landing, up to the very moment when we were talking. I didn't hide any thing, but told the whole story of the cards, the gold, and the diamonds; and ended by letting him know that if he should be so sorry to lose Rachel, now that we both knew so much about her, it would go a mighty deal harder with me. I told him all that Mr. Eckhardt had said since his return, and what hopes I had that all would go as he wished it. But the old man shook his head. He didn't like what he heard about Mr. Eckhardt's gambling, and was very tight upon me for letting myself be tempted to deal with him in the same business. He didn't think the worse of Rachel, of course, but he looked upon it as a sort of misfortune to be in any way connected with a gambler.

"We hadn't much longer time for confabulating, for Mr. Eckhardt now came from the house and joined us. He was a man who always came jump to the business, whatever it was, that he had in hand. But he wasn't a rough man, though a quick one. He had a way of doing the bluntest things without rough-

ing the feelings. When he drew nigh, he took my father's arm to lead him aside, speaking to me at the same time—'Rayner, go to Rachel;—I have prepared her to see you. I will explain every thing to your father, if you have not already done it; and if you have, I still have something to say.'

"You may reckon I didn't stop to count the tracks after that. I verily think that I made the door of the house in a hop-skip-and-jump from the stable. Yet, when I got to the threshold, I stuck —I stuck fast. I heard a low sweet sort of moaning from within, and oh! how my heart smote me when I heard it. I thought to myself, it's so cruel to force this poor girl's inclination. What can she see in me? That was my question to myself, and it made me mighty humble, I tell you, when I asked it. But that very humbleness did me good, and gave me sort of strength. 'If she don't see any thing in me to favour,' was my thought, 'at least I'll show her that I'm not the mean-spirited creature to take advantage of her necessity;' and when I thought in this manner, I went forward with a bound, and stood before her. I took her hand in mine, and said,—but Lord bless me, it's no use to try and tell you what I said, for I don't know myself. The words poured from me free enough. My heart was very full. I meant to speak kindly and humbly, and do the thing generously, and I reckon that, when the heart means what is right, and has a straight purpose before it, the tongue can't go very far out of the way. Nor did mine, if I am to judge of the effects which followed it. It's enough for me to tell you, that, though the tears wasn't altogether dried up in Rachel's eyes, her lips began to smile; she let her hand rest in mine, and she said something, but what it was, I can't tell you. It's enough to say that she let me know that she thought that all that had been proposed by Mr. Eckhardt was for her good and happiness, and she was willing to consent to whatever he had said. He came in a little while after, and seemed quite satisfied. He talked, as if he himself was particularly pleased, but there was a very great earnestness in his looks that awed and overpowered me. His eyes seemed very much sunk, even in the short time he had been gone, the wrinkles seemed to have doubled in number on his face; his form trembled very much, and I could perceive that he took his pills from the little

box of silver twice as often as ever. He didn't give himself or me much time to think over what was to happen, for he hadn't been ten minutes returned to the house, after the matter was understood all round, before he said to me in a whisper:

"'Rayner, my lad, you are a good fellow; suppose you ride off at once for your parson. You have one, your father tells me, within a few miles. A smart gallop will bring him back with you before sunset, and I would see you married to-night. I shall have to leave you in the morning.'

"Ah! stranger, don't wonder if I made the dust fly after that! That night we were married.

CHAPTER X.

"THE next morning, just as breakfast was over, Mr. Eckhardt rose and buttoned his coat.

"'Rachel, my child,' said he, 'I shall now leave you. It will be perhaps some time before I see you again. For that matter, I may never see you again. But I have fulfilled my promise to your dear father. You are the wife of a good man—a gentle and kind-hearted man. He will make you a good husband, I believe and hope. You, I know, will make him a good wife. The seeds of goodness and happiness are here in this cottage—may they grow to fruits. Kiss me, my child! Kiss me! It may be for the last time!'

"'No!' said she; 'oh, no!' and she caught and she clung to him. It was a time to bring tears, stranger, not to talk. There was a good many words said by all of us, but not much talking. It was a cry and an exclamation like, with poor Rachel, and then she sunk off in the arms of Mr. Eckhardt. I was monstrous frightened; but he carried her into the room and laid her on the bed. 'She will soon get over it,' said he, 'and in the mean time I'll steal away. When she recovers follow me. You will find me ——' He told me where to find him—at the place where we had played together on the dead horse—but the sentence he finished in a whisper. Then he stooped and kissed her, gave her one long look, and his lips moved as if he was speaking a blessing over her. After this he turned from me hurriedly, as if to conceal the tear in his eye. But I saw it. It couldn't be concealed. It was about the largest tear I ever did see in the eye of a man, but I reckon there was only that one. He was gone before Rachel come to herself. Till that happened I was about the most miserable creature on earth. When she opened her eyes and found that he was already gone, her troubles somewhat softened; and when I found that, I set off to follow Mr. Eckhardt, as he had directed me. I found him at the place appointed, but

he had no horse and no cloak, and didn't appear to have made any of the usual arrangements for travelling. I expressed my surprise. 'Where's your horse?' I demanded.—'I shall need none. Besides, I *have* none. You seem to forget, Rayner, that the horse is yours.'—'Mine!'—'Yes! you won him!'—'But you can't mean, sir——' I was beginning to expostulate, when he put his hand on my mouth. 'Say no more, Rayner. You are a good fellow. The horse *is* yours, whether you have him by your skill or my generosity. Did I not tell you that I intended to make you my heir?'

"I looked bewildered, and felt so, and said, 'Well, you don't intend to leave us then?'—'Yes I do.'—'How do you mean to go—by water?' Remember, the river was pretty near us, and though I didn't myself expect any steamboat, yet I thought it likely he might have heard of one. 'Very possible,' he answered, with something of a smile upon his countenance. He continued, after a short pause, 'It is difficult to say by what conveyance a man goes when he goes out of the world, Rayner. The journey I propose to take is no other. Life is an uncertain business, Rayner. Uncertain as it is, most people seem never to have enough of it. I am of a different thinking. I have had only too much. I am neither well in it, nor fit for it, and I shall leave it. I have made all my arrangements, settled my concerns, and, as I promised, you shall be my heir.' I began to speak and expostulate with him, but he stopped me. 'Rayner, you are a good fellow, but you shouldn't interrupt me. As I have but little time for talking, you should let me enjoy it all. You can say what you have to say when I am gone, and I promise you *I* shall never interrupt *you* then. You have heard me, you understand my words.'

"'I think I do,' was my answer; 'you mean to take your own life!'

"'True, Rayner! but you speak as if it was yours I were about to take!'

"I told him I felt almost as bad as if it was, and asked him why he should think of such a deed.

"'It's a long story, Rayner, and you would probably understand it as thoroughly in ten words as in ten thousand. Perhaps

I should say enough in telling you that I am sick of life, and that life sickens me. Every moment that I live humbles and degrades me. I have been the master of three princely fortunes; and now I have only the means to carry me on my last journey. I have had the reputation of talents, wit, and wisdom in high degree, but lack the strength to forbear the companionship of the basest, and the wit to keep from being the victim of the vilest. Had I been the only victim, Rayner! But that poor child, now your wife—the child of a dear relative and friend—entrusted to my guardianship in the confidence of love, which, at dying, demanded of me no pledge, but that which it fancied was speaking through my eyes—that child has been the victim also! Start not! The child is pure as any angel. It was the robbery of her fortune of which I speak. I squandered hers with my own. I did not bring her to beggary, Rayner. No! But I have lived in perpetual dread that I should do so! Now that she is yours, I have no such fears. I know that she is safe—that she will do well—that you will both do well. Do not fancy, my good fellow, when I tell you this, that I have been seeking in vain for a husband for the child. The thing is otherwise. Husbands have sought for her. Men of rank and substance, for whose attentions the mothers of most daughters would have worked their wits and fingers to the bone. But if I squandered Rachel's fortune—mark me—I was resolved that *she* should not be sacrificed. I resolved that I would do her justice, at least in that one respect—that she should never be yielded, if I could help it, to the shallow witling, the profligate, or the brute—let their social rank and worldly possessions be what they might. I knew her, and fancied I could tell what sort of person would suit her. I have found that person in you—so I believe—and my work is ended. The labourer knocks off when his work is done, and so will I. There is one thing, Rayner——'

"He took from his pocket the buckskin roll which contained his pack of cards.

"'Do you see these? I will not say that they have been my bane. I were a fool to say so. My own weakness was my bane. They were only the unconscious instruments in my hands, as innocent as the dirk or pistol in the hands of the as-

sassin. But they have their dangers, Rayner; and I would protect you against them. Take them; I promised you should be my heir. Take them, but not to play them. Keep them in your eyes as an omen. Show them to your children as a warning. Tell them what I have told you; and while you familiarize their eyes with their forms, familiarize their hearts with their dangers. There! do not lose sight of them. Leave me now. Farewell! You see I am at the bottom of my box.'

"He thrust the cards into my hands, and as he spoke, he drew out his little silver box, and took from it the only pill which remained. This he swallowed, and then handed me the box also. I refused to take it. 'Pshaw!' said he, 'why not? your refusal to take it can have no effect on my determination! Take it and leave me!' But I still refused. He turned from me, saying: 'You're a foolish fellow, Rayner;' and walked down the road leading to the river. I followed him closely. He turned half round, once or twice, muttered and seemed discontented. I still kept close with him, and began to expostulate. But he interrupted me fiercely; and I now perceived that his eyes began to glisten and to glare very wildly. It had not escaped my observation, that the last pill which he had taken was greatly larger than any he had used before; and I then remembered, that before the marriage ceremony was performed, on the previous night, he had opened the box more than once, in my presence, and I noted that it contained a good many. By this time we reached the banks of the river. He turned full upon me. 'Rayner,' said he, 'you're a good fellow, but you must go home to your wife.'—'It's impossible,' said I, 'to leave you.'—'We'll, see to that,' said he, and he turned towards the river. I took it for certain he was going to plunge in, and I jumped forward to seize him, but, just as my arms were extended to embrace him, he wheeled about and clapped a pistol to my head. I started back, quickly enough, as you may suppose; and he exclaimed—'Ah! Rayner, you are a good fellow, but you cannot prevent the journey. Farewell!' With these words he flung me the pistol, which I afterwards found was unloaded, and, before I could speak or think, he sprang from the bluff into the stream. It appeared to me as if I heard the splash before I saw the motion. I ran up

the bluff where he had stood, as soon as I could recover myself, and saw where the water-rings were spreading in great circles where he had gone down. I didn't give myself a moment after that. I could swim like a duck and dive like a serpent, and had no fear of the water for myself; so in I jumped, and fished about as long as I could stand it underneath; but I could find nothing of him. He had given himself up to the currents so entirely, that they whirled him out of sight in a minute. When I rose and got to the shore, I saw his hat floating among some bushes on the other shore. But as for poor Mr. Eckhardt, he was gone, sure enough, upon his last journey!

"You see our little family. The boy is very much like him in looks, and I reckon in understanding. He's very thoughtful and smart. We are happy, stranger, and I don't believe that Mr. Eckhardt was wrong in his notion that I would make Rachel happy. She tells me she is, and it makes me happy to believe her. It makes her sad to see the cards, and sad to hear of them, but she thinks it best for our boy that he should hear the story and learn it all by heart; and that makes her patient, and patience brings a sort of peace along with it that's pretty much like happiness. I could tell you more, my friend, but it's not needful, and your eyes look as if they had kept open long enough for one sitting. So come with me, and let me show you where you are to lie down!"

These words roused me! I half suspect that I was drowsing in my chair. I can hardly suppose, dear reader, that you could be capable of an act of like forgetfulness.

THE ARM-CHAIR OF TUSTENUGGEE.

A TRADITION OF THE CATAWBA.

CHAPTER I.

The windy month had set in, the leaves were falling, and the light-footed hunters of Catawba, set forth upon the chase. Little groups went off in every direction, and before two weeks had elapsed from the beginning of the campaign, the whole nation was broken up into parties, each under the guidance of an individual warrior. The course of the several hunting bands was taken according to the tastes or habits of these leaders. Some of the Indians were famous for their skill in hunting the otter, could swim as long with head under water as himself, and be not far from his haunches, when he emerged to breathe. These followed the course of shallow waters and swamps, and thick, dense bays, in which it was known that he found his favourite haunts. The bear hunter pushed for the cane brakes and the bee trees; and woe to the black bear whom he encountered with his paws full of honeycomb, which he was unwilling to leave behind him. The active warrior took his way towards the hills, seeking for the brown wolf and the deer; and, if the truth were known, smiled with wholesale contempt at the more timorous who desired less adventurous triumphs. Many set forth in couples only, avoiding with care all the clamorous of the tribe; and some few, the more surly or successful—the inveterate bachelors of the nation—were content to make their forward progress alone. The old men prepared their traps and nets, the boys their blow guns, and followed with the squaws slowly, according to the division made by the hunters among themselves. They carried the blankets and bread

stuffs, and camped nightly in noted places, to which, according to previous arrangement, the hunters might repair at evening and bring their game. In this way, some of the tribes followed the course of the Catawba, even to its source. Others darted off towards the Pacolet and Broad rivers, and there were some, the most daring and swift of foot, who made nothing of a journey to the Tiger river, and the rolling mountains of Spartanburg.

There were two warriors who pursued this course. One of them was named Conattee, and a braver man and more fortunate hunter never lived. But he had a wife who was a greater scold than Xantippe. She was the wonder and the terror of the tribe, and quite as ugly as the one-eyed squaw of Tustenuggee, the grey demon of Enoree. Her tongue was the signal for "slinking," among the bold hunters of Turkey-town; and when they heard it, "now," said the young women, who sympathised, as all proper young women will do, with the handsome husband of an ugly wife, "now," said they, "we know that poor Conattee has come home." The return of the husband, particularly if he brought no game, was sure to be followed by a storm of that "dry thunder," so well known, which never failed to be heard at the farthest end of the village.

The companion of Conattee on the present expedition was named Selonee—one of the handsomest lads in the whole nation. He was tall and straight like a pine tree; had proved his skill and courage in several expeditions against the Chowannee red sticks, and had found no young warriors of the Cherokee, though he had been on the war path against them and had stricken all their posts, who could circumvent him in stratagem or conquer him in actual blows. His renown as a hunter was not less great. He had put to shame the best wolf-takers of the tribe, and the lodge of his venerable father, Chifonti, was never without meat. There was no good reason why Conattee, the married man, should be so intimate with Selonee, the single—there was no particular sympathy between the two; but, thrown together in sundry expeditions, they had formed an intimacy, which, strange to say, was neither denounced nor discouraged by the virago wife of the former. She who approved of but few of her husband's movements, and still fewer of his friends and fellowships, forbore all her reproaches

when Selonee was his companion. She was the meekest, gentlest, sweetest tempered of all wives whenever the young hunter came home with her husband; and he, poor man, was consequently, never so well satisfied as when he brought Selonee with him. It was on such occasions, only, that the poor Conattee could persuade himself to regard Macourah as a tolerable personage. How he came to marry such a creature—such a termagant, and so monstrous ugly—was a mystery which none of the damsels of Catawba could elucidate, though the subject was one on which, when mending the young hunter's mocasins, they expended no small quantity of conjecture. Conattee, we may be permitted to say, was still quite popular among them, in spite of his bad taste, and manifest unavailableness; possibly, for the very reason that his wife was universally detested; and it will, perhaps, speak something for their charity, if we pry no deeper into their motives, to say that the wish was universal among them that the Opitchi Manneyto, or Black Devil of their belief, would take the virago to himself, and leave to the poor Conattee some reasonable hope of being made happy by a more indulgent spouse.

CHAPTER II.

WELL, Conattee and Selonee were out of sight of the smoke of "Turkey-town," and, conscious of his freedom as he no longer heard the accents of domestic authority, the henpecked husband gave a loose to his spirits, and made ample amends to himself, by the indulgence of joke and humour, for the sober constraints which fettered him at home. Selonee joined with him in his merriment, and the resolve was mutual that they should give the squaws the slip and not linger in their progress till they had thrown the Tiger river behind them. To trace their course till they came to the famous hunting ground which bordered upon the Pacolet, will scarcely be necessary, since, as they did not stop to hunt by the way, there were necessarily but few incidents to give interest to their movements. When they had reached the river, however, they made for a cove, well known to them on previous seasons, which lay between the parallel waters of the Pacolet, and a little stream called the Thicketty—a feeder of the Eswawpuddenah, in which they had confident hopes of finding the game which they desired. In former years the spot had been famous as a sheltering place for herds of wolves; and, with something like the impatience of a warrior waiting for his foe, the hunters prepared their strongest shafts and sharpest flints, and set their keen eyes upon the closest places of the thicket, into which they plunged fearlessly. They had not proceeded far, before a single boar-wolf, of amazing size, started up in their path; and, being slightly wounded by the arrow of Selonee, which glanced first upon some twigs beneath which he lay, he darted off with a fearful howl in the direction of Conattee, whose unobstructed shaft, penetrating the side beneath the fore shoulders, inflicted a fearful, if not a fatal wound, upon the now thoroughly enraged beast. He rushed upon Conattee in his desperation, but the savage was too quick for him; leaping behind a tree, he avoided the rashing stroke with which the white tusks threatened him, and by this time was enabled to fit a second arrow

to his bow. His aim was true, and the stone blade of the shaft went quivering into the shaggy monster's heart; who, under the pang of the last convulsion, bounded into the muddy waters of the Thicketty Creek, to the edge of which the chase had now brought all the parties. Conattee beheld him plunge furiously forward —twice—thrice—then rest with his nostrils in the water, as the current bore him from sight around a little elbow of the creek. But it was not often that the Indian hunter of those days lost the game which he had stricken. Conattee stripped to it, threw his fringed hunting shirt of buckskin on the bank, with his bow and arrows, his mocasins and leggins beside it, and reserving only his knife, he called to Selonee, who was approaching him, to keep them in sight, and plunged into the water in pursuit of his victim. Selonee gave little heed to the movements of his companion, after the first two or three vigorous strokes which he beheld him make. Such a pursuit, as it promised no peril, called for little consideration from this hardy and fearless race, and Selonee amused himself by striking into a thick copse which they had not yet traversed, in search of other sport. There he started the she-wolf, and found sufficient employment on his own hands to call for all his attention to himself. When Selonee first came in sight of her, she was lying on a bed of rushes and leaves, which she had prepared under the roots of a gigantic Spanish oak. Her cubs, to the number of five, lay around her, keeping a perfect silence, which she had no doubt enforced upon them after her own fashion, and which was rigidly maintained until they saw him. It was then that the instincts of the fierce beasts could no longer be suppressed, and they joined at once in a short chopping bark, or cry, at the stranger, while their little eyes flashed fire, and their red jaws, thinly sprinkled with the first teeth, were gnashed together with a show of that ferocious hatred of man, which marks their nature, but which, fortunately for Selonee, was too feeble at that time to make his approach to them dangerous. But the dam demanded greater consideration. With one sweep of her fore-paw she drew all the young ones behind her, and showing every preparedness for flight, she began to move backward slowly beneath the overhanging limbs of the tree, still keeping her keen, fiery eye fixed *upon the* hunter. But Selonee was not disposed to suffer her to

get off so easily. The success of Conattee had just given him sufficient provocation to make him silently resolve that the she-wolf—who is always more to be dreaded than the male, as, with nearly all his strength, she has twice his swiftness, and, with her young about her, more than twice his ferocity—should testify more completely to his prowess than the victory just obtained by his companion could possibly speak for his. His eye was fixed upon hers, and hers, never for a moment, taken from him. It was his object to divert it, since he well knew, that with his first movement, she would most probably spring upon him. Without lifting his bow, which he nevertheless had in readiness, he whistled shrilly as if to his dog; and answered himself by a correct imitation of the bark of the Indian cur, the known enemy of the wolf, and commonly his victim. The keen eye of the angry beast looked suddenly around as if fearing an assault upon her young ones from behind. In that moment, the arrow of Selonee was driven through her neck, and when she leaped forward to the place where he stood, he was no longer to be seen.

From a tree which he had thrown between them, he watched her movements and prepared a second shaft. Meanwhile she made her way back slowly to her young, and before she could again turn towards him a second arrow had given her another and severer wound. Still, as Selonee well knew the singular tenacity of life possessed by these fierce animals, he prudently changed his position with every shaft, and took especial care to place himself in the rear of some moderately sized tree, sufficiently large to shelter him from her claws, yet small enough to enable him to take free aim around it. Still he did not, at any time, withdraw more than twenty steps from his enemy. Divided in her energies by the necessity of keeping near her young, he was conscious of her inability to pursue him far. Carrying on the war in this manner he had buried no less than five arrows in her body, and it was not until his sixth had penetrated her eye, that he deemed himself safe in the nearer approach which he now meditated. She had left her cubs, on receiving his last shot, and was writhing and leaping, blinded, no less than maddened, by the wound, in a vain endeavour to approach her assailant. It was now that Selonee determined on a closer conflict. It was the

great boast of the Catawba warriors to grapple with the wolf, and while he yet struggled, to tear the quick quivering heart from his bosom. He placed his bow and arrows behind the tree, and taking in his left hand a chunk or fragment of a bough, while he grasped his unsheathed knife in his right, he leapt in among the cubs, and struck one of them a severe blow upon the head with the chunk. Its scream, and the confusion among the rest, brought back the angry dam, and though she could see only imperfectly, yet, guided by their clamour, she rushed with open jaws upon the hunter. With keen, quick eyes, and steady resolute nerves, he waited for her approach, and when she turned her head aside, to strike him with her sharp teeth, he thrust the pine fragment which he carried in his left hand, into her extended jaws, and pressing fast upon her, bore back her haunches to the earth. All this while the young ones were impotently gnawing at the heels of the warrior, which had been fearlessly planted in the very midst of them. But these he did not heed. The larger and fiercer combatant called for all his attention, and her exertions, quickened by the spasms of her wounds, rendered necessary all his address and strength to preserve the advantage he had gained. The fierce beast had sunk her teeth by this into the wood, and, leaving it in her jaws, he seized her with the hand, now freed, by the throat, and, bearing her upward, so as to yield him a plain and easy stroke at her belly, he drove the deep knife into it, and drew the blade upwards, until resisted by the bone of the breast. It was then, while she lay writhing and rolling upon the ground in the agonies of death, that he tore the heart from the opening he had made, and hurled it down to the cubs, who seized on it with avidity. This done, he patted and caressed them, and while they struggled about him for the meat, he cut a fork in the ears of each, and putting the slips in his pouch, left the young ones without further hurt, for the future sport of the hunter. The dam he scalped, and with this trophy in possession, he pushed back to the place where he had left the accoutrements of Conattee, which he found undisturbed in the place where he had laid them.

CHAPTER III.

But where was Conattee himself during all this period? Some hours had elapsed since he had taken the river after the tiger that he had slain, and it was something surprising to Selonee that he should have remained absent and without his clothes so long. The weather was cold and unpleasant, and it could scarce be a matter of choice with the hunter, however hardy, to suffer all its biting bleaknesses when his garments were within his reach. This reflection made Selonee apprehensive that some harm had happened to his companion. He shouted to him, but received no answer. Could he have been seized with the cramp while in the stream, and drowned before he could extricate himself. This was a danger to which the very best of swimmers is liable at certain seasons of the year, and in certain conditions of the body. Selonee reproached himself that he had not waited beside the stream until the result of Conattee's experiment was known. The mind of the young hunter was troubled with many fears and doubts. He went down the bank of the river, and called aloud with all his lungs, until the woods and waters re-echoed, again and again, the name of Conattee. He received no other response. With a mind filled with increasing fears, each more unpleasant than the last, Selonee plunged into the creek, and struck off for the opposite shore, at the very point at which the tiger had been about to turn, under the influence of the current, when Conattee went in after him. He was soon across, and soon found the tracks of the hunter in the gray sands upon its margin. He found, too, to his great delight, the traces made by the carcass of the tiger—the track was distinct enough from the blood which dropped from the reeking skin of the beast, and Selonee rejoiced in the certainty that the traces which he followed would soon lead him to his friend. But not so. He had scarcely gone fifty yards into the wood when his tracks failed him at the foot of a crooked, fallen tree, one of the most gnarled and complicated of all the

crooked trees of the forest; here all signs disappeared. Conattee was not only not there, but had left no sort of clue by which to follow him further. This was the strangest thing of all. The footprints were distinct enough till he came to the spot where lay the crooked tree, but there he lost them. He searched the forest around him, in every direction. Not a copse escaped his search —not a bay—not a thicket—not an island—and he came back to the spot where the tiger had been skinned, faint and weary, and more sorrowful than can well be spoken. At one time he fancied his friend was drowned, at another, that he was taken prisoner by the Cherokees. But there were his tracks from the river, and there were no other tracks than his own. Besides, so far as the latter supposition was concerned, it was scarcely possible that so brave and cunning a warrior would suffer himself to be so completely entrapped and carried off by an enemy, without so much as being able to give the alarm; and, even had that been the case, would it be likely that the enemy would have suffered him to pass without notice. "But," here the suggestion naturally arose in the mind of Selonee, "may they not even now be on the track!" With the suggestion the gallant youth bounded to his feet. "It is no fat turkey that they seek!" he exclaimed, drawing out an arrow from the leash that hung upon his shoulders, and fitting it to his bow, while his busy, glancing eye watched every shadow in the wood, and his keen, quick ear noted every sound. But there were no signs of an enemy, and a singular and mournful stillness hung over the woods. Never was creature more miserable than Selonee. He called aloud, until his voice grew hoarse, and his throat sore, upon the name of Conattee. There was no answer, but the gibing echoes of his own hoarse accents. Once more he went back to the river, once more he plunged into its bosom, and with lusty sinews struck out for a thick green island that lay some quarter of a mile below, to which he thought it not improbable that the hunter might have wandered in pursuit of other game. It was a thickly wooded but small island, which he traversed in an hour. Finding nothing, he made his weary way back to the spot from which his friend had started on leaving him. Here he found his clothes where he had hidden them. The neighbourhood of this region he traversed in like manner with

the opposite—going over ground, and into places, which it was scarcely in the verge of physical possibility that his friend's person could have gone.

The day waned and night came on, and still the persevering hunter gave not up his search. The midnight found him at the foot of the tree, where they had parted, exhausted but sleepless, and suffering bitterly in mind from those apprehensions which every moment of hopeless search had necessarily helped to accumulate and strengthen. Day dawned, and his labour was renewed. The unhappy warrior went resolutely over all the ground which he had traversed the night before. Once more he crossed the river, and followed, step by step, the still legible foot tracks of Conattee. These, he again noted, were all in the opposite direction to the stream, to which it was evident he had not returned. But, after reaching the place where lay the fallen tree, all signs failed. Selonee looked round the crooked tree, crawled under its sprawling and twisted limbs, broke into the hollow which was left by its uptorn roots, and again shouted, until all the echoes gave back his voice, the name of Conattee, imploring him for an answer if he could hear him and reply. But the echoes died away, leaving him in a silence that spoke more loudly to his heart than before, that his quest was hopeless. Yet he gave it not up until the day had again failed him. That night, as before, he slept upon the ground. With the dawn, he again went over it, and with equally bad success. This done, he determined to return to the camp. He no longer had any spirit to pursue the sports for which alone he had set forth. His heart was full of sorrow, his limbs were weary, and he felt none of that vigorous elasticity which had given him such great renown as a brave and a hunter, among his own and the neighbouring nations. He tied the clothes of Conattee upon his shoulders, took his bow and arrows, now sacred in his sight, along with him, and turned his eyes homeward. The next day, at noon, he reached the encampment.

CHAPTER IV.

THE hunters were all in the woods, and none but the squaws and the papooses left in the encampment. Selonee came within sight of their back settlements, and seated himself upon a log at the edge of the forest with his back carefully turned towards the smoke of the camp. Nobody ventured to approach him while in this situation; but, at night, when the hunters came dropping in, one by one, Selonee drew nigh to them. He called them apart from the women, and then told them his story.

"This is a strange tale which the wolf-chief tells us," said one of the old men, with a smile of incredulity.

"It is a true tale, father," was the reply.

"Conattee was a brave chief!"

"Very brave, father," said Selonee.

"Had he not eyes to see?"

"The great bird, that rises to the sun, had not better," was the reply.

"What painted jay was it that said Conattee was a fool?"

"The painted bird lied, that said so, my father," was the response of Selonee.

"And comes Selonee, the wolf-chief, to us, with a tale that Conattee was blind, and could not see; a coward that could not strike the she-wolf; a fool that knew not where to set down his foot; and shall we not say Selonee lies upon his brother, even as the painted bird that makes a noise in my ears. Selonee has slain Conattee with his knife. See, it is the blood of Conattee upon the war-shirt of Selonee."

"It is the blood of the she-wolf," cried the young warrior, with a natural indignation.

"Let Selonee go to the woods behind the lodges, till the chiefs say what shall be done to Selonee, because of Conattee, whom he slew."

"Selonee will go, as Emathla, the wise chief, has commanded,"

replied the young warrior. "He will wait behind the lodges, till the chiefs have said what is good to be done to him, and if they say that he must die because of Conattee, it is well. Selonee laughs at death. But the blood of Conattee is not upon the war-shirt of Selonee. He has said it is the blood of the wolf's mother." With these words the young chief drew forth the skin of the wolf which he had slain, together with the tips of the ears taken from the cubs, and leaving them in the place where he had sat, withdrew, without further speech, from the assembly which was about to sit in judgment upon his life.

CHAPTER V.

THE consultation that followed was close and earnest. There was scarcely any doubt in the minds of the chiefs that Conattee was slain by his companion. He had brought back with him the arms and all the clothes of the hunter. He was covered with his blood, as they thought; and the grief which filled his heart and depressed his countenance, looked, in their eyes, rather like the expression of guilt than suffering. For a long while did they consult together. Selonee had friends who were disposed to save him; but he had enemies also, as merit must have always, and these were glad of the chance afforded them to put out of their reach, a rival of whom they were jealous, and a warrior whom they feared. Unfortunately for Selonee, the laws of the nation but too well helped the malice of his foes. These laws, as peremptory as those of the Medes and Persians, held him liable in his own life for that of the missing hunter; and the only indulgence that could be accorded to Selonee, and which was obtained for him, was, that he might be allowed a single moon in which to find Conattee, and bring him home to his people.

"Will Selonee go seek Conattee—the windy moon is for Selonee—let him bring Conattee home to his people." Thus said the chiefs, when the young warrior was again brought before them.

"Selonee would die to find Conattee," was the reply.

"He will die if he finds him not!" answered the chief Emathla.

"It is well!" calmly spoke the young warrior. "Is Selonee free to go?"

"The windy moon is for Selonee. Will he return to the lodges if he finds not Conattee?" was the inquiry of Emathla.

"Is Selonee a dog, to fly!" indignantly demanded the warrior. "Let Emathla send a young warrior on the right and on the left of Selonee, if he trusts not what is spoken by Selonee."

"Selonee will go alone, and bring back Conattee."

CHAPTER VI.

THE confidence thus reposed in one generally esteemed a murderer, and actually under sentence as such, is customary among the Indians; nor is it often abused. The loss of caste which would follow their flight from justice, is much more terrible among them than any fear of death—which an Indian may avoid, but not through fear. Their loss of caste among themselves, apart from the outlawry which follows it, is, in fact, a loss of the soul. The heaven of the great Manneyto is denied to one under outlawry of the nation, and such a person is then the known and chosen slave of the demon, Opitchi-Manneyto. It was held an unnecessary insult on the part of Emathla, to ask Selonee if he would return to meet his fate. But Emathla was supposed to favour the enemies of Selonee.

With such a gloomy alternative before him in the event of his proving unsuccessful, the young hunter retraced his steps to the fatal waters where Conattee had disappeared. With a spirit no less warmly devoted to his friend, than anxious to avoid the disgraceful doom to which he was destined, the youth spared no pains, withheld no exertion, overlooked no single spot, and omitted no art known to the hunter, to trace out the mystery which covered the fate of Conattee. But days passed of fruitless labour, and the last faint slender outlines of the moon which had been allotted him for the search, gleamed forth a sorrowful light upon his path, as he wearily traced it onward to the temporary lodges of the tribe.

Once more he resumed his seat before the council and listened to the doom which was in reserve for him. When the sentence was pronounced, he untied his arrows, loosened the belt at his waist, put a fillet around his head, made of the green bark of a little sapling which he cut in the neighbouring woods, then rising to his feet, he spoke thus, in language, and with a spirit, becoming so great a warrior.

"It is well. The chiefs have spoken, and the wolf-chief does not tremble. He loves the chase, but he does not weep like a woman, because it is forbidden that he go after the deer—he loves to fright the young hares of the Cherokee, but he laments not that ye say ye can conquer the Cherokee without his help. Fathers, I have slain the deer and the wolf—my lodge is full of their ears. I have slain the Cherokee, till the scalps are about my knees when I walk in the cabin. I go not to the dark valley without glory—I have had the victories of grey hairs, but there is no grey hair in my own. I have no more to say—there is a deed for every arrow that is here. Bid the young men get their bows ready, let them put a broad stone upon their arrows that may go soon into the life—I will show my people how to die."

They led him forth as he commanded, to the place of execution—a little space behind the encampment, where a hole had been already dug for his burial. While he went, he recited his victories to the youths who attended him. To each he gave an arrow which he was required to keep, and with this arrow, he related some incident in which he had proved his valour, either in conflict with some other warrior, or with the wild beasts of the woods. These deeds, each of them was required to remember and relate, and show the arrow which was given with the narrative on occasion of this great state solemnity. In this way, their traditions are preserved. When he reached the grave, he took his station before it, the executioners, with their arrows, being already placed in readiness. The whole tribe had assembled to witness the execution, the warriors and boys in the foreground, the squaws behind them. A solemn silence prevailed over the scene, and a few moments only remained to the victim; when the wife of Conattee darted forward from the crowd bearing in her hands a peeled wand, with which, with every appearance of anger, she struck Selonee over the shoulders, exclaiming as she did so:

"Come, thou dog, thou shalt not die—thou shalt lie in the doorway of Conattee, and bring venison for his wife. Shall there be no one to bring meat to my lodge? Thou shalt do this, Selonee—thou shalt not die."

A murmur arose from the crowd at these words.

"She hath claimed Selonee for her husband, in place of Conattee—well, she hath the right."

The enemies of Selonee could not object. The widow had, in fact, exercised a privilege which is recognized by the Indian laws almost universally; and the policy by which she was governed in the present instance, was sufficiently apparent to all the village. It was evident, now that Conattee was gone, that nobody could provide for the woman who had no sons, and no male relations, and who was too execrably ugly, and too notorious as a scold, to leave it possible that she could ever procure another husband so inexperienced or so flexible as the one she had lost. Smartly striking Selonee on his shoulders, she repeated her command that he should rise and follow her.

"Thou wilt take this dog to thy lodge, that he may hunt thee venison?" demanded the old chief, Emathla.

"Have I not said?" shouted the scold—"hear you not? The dog is mine—I bid him follow me."

"Is there no friendly arrow to seek my heart?" murmured the young warrior, as, rising slowly from the grave into which he had previously descended, he prepared to obey the laws of his nation, in the commands of the woman who claimed him to replace the husband who was supposed to have died by his hands. Even the foes of Selonee looked on him with lessened hostility, and the pity of his friends was greater now than when he stood on the precipice of death. The young women of the tribe wept bitterly as they beheld so monstrous a sacrifice. Meanwhile, the exulting hag, as if conscious of her complete control over the victim, goaded him forward with repeated strokes of her wand. She knew that she was hated by all the young women, and she was delighted to show them a conquest which would have been a subject of pride to any among them. With this view she led the captive through their ranks. As they parted mournfully, on either hand, to suffer the two to pass, Selonee stopped short and motioned one of the young women who stood at the greatest distance behind the rest, looking on with eyes which, if they had no tears, yet gave forth an expression of desolateness more woful than any tears could have done. With clasped hands, and trembling as she came, the gentle maiden drew nigh.

and his hands, flattened to his thighs, were enveloped in as complete a casing of bark as covered the remainder of the tree around him. Even his knife and wolf skin, to his great surprise, suffered in like manner, the bark having contracted them into one of those huge bulging knobs that so numerously deformed the tree. With all his thoughts and consciousness remaining, Conattee had yet lost every faculty of action. When he tried to scream aloud, his jaws felt the contraction of a pressure upon them, which resisted all their efforts, while an oppressive thorn growing upon a wild vine that hung before his face, was brought by every movement of himself or of the tree into his very mouth. The poor hunter immediately conceived his situation—he was in the power of Tustenuggee, the Grey Demon of Enoree. The tree upon which he sat was one of those magic trees which the tradition of his people entitled the "Arm-chair of Tustenuggee." In these traps for the unwary the wicked demon caught his victim, and exulted in his miseries. Here he sometimes remained until death released him; for it was not often that the power into whose clutches he had fallen, suffered his prey to escape through a sudden feeling of lenity and good humour. The only hope of Conattee was that Selonee might suspect his condition; in which event his rescue was simple and easy enough. It was only to hew off the limbs, or pare away the bark, and the victim was uncovered in his primitive integrity. But how improbable that this discovery should be made. He had no voice to declare his bondage. He had no capacity for movement by which he might reveal the truth to his comrade's eyes; and unless some divine instinct should counsel his friend to an experiment which he would scarcely think upon, of himself, the poor prisoner felt that he must die in the miserable bondage into which he had fallen. While these painful convictions were passing through his mind, he heard the distant shoutings of Selonee. In a little while he beheld the youth anxiously seeking him in every quarter, following his trail at length to the very tree in which he was bound, crawling like himself beneath its branches, but not sitting like himself to be caught upon its trunk. Vainly did the poor fellow strive to utter but a few words, however faintly, apprising the youth of his condition. The effort died away in the most imperfect breathing,

sounding in his own ears like the faint sigh of some budding flower. With equal ill success did he aim to struggle with his limbs. He was too tightly grasped, in every part, to stir in the slightest degree a single member. He saw the fond search, meanwhile, which his comrade maintained, and his heart yearned the more in fondness for the youth. But it was with consummate horror that he saw him depart as night came on. Miserable, indeed, were his feelings that night. The voice of the Grey Demon alone kept him company, and he and his one-eyed wife made merry with his condition, goading him the livelong night with speeches of cruel gibe and mischievous reflection, such as the following:

"There is no hope for you, Conattee, till some one takes your place. Some one must sit in your lap, whom you are willing to leave behind you, before you can get out of mine," was the speech of the Grey Demon, who, perched upon Conattee's shoulders, bent his huge knotty head over him, while his red eyes looked into the half-hidden ones of the environed hunter, and glared upon him with the exultation of the tyrant at last secure of his prey. Night passed away at length, and, with the dawn, how was the hopeless heart of Conattee refreshed as he again saw Selonee appear. He then remembered the words of Tustenuggee, which told him that he could not escape until some one sat in his lap whom he was willing to leave behind him. The fancy rose in his mind that Selonee would do this; but could it be that he would consent to leave his friend behind him. Life was sweet, and great was the temptation. At one moment he almost wished that Selonee would draw nigh and seat himself after his fatigue. As if the young hunter knew his wish, he drew nigh at that instant; but the better feelings in Conattee's heart grew strong as he approached, and, striving to twist and writhe in his bondage, and labouring at the same time to call out in warning to his friend, he manifested the noble resolution not to avail himself of his friend's position to relieve his own; and, as if the warning of Conattee had really reached the understanding of Selonee, the youth retraced his steps, and once more hurried away from the place of danger. With his final departure the fond hopes of the prisoner sunk within him; and when hour after hour had gone by without the appear-

ance of any of his people, and without any sort of change in his condition, he gave himself up utterly for lost. The mocks and jeers of the Grey Demon and his one-eyed squaw filled his ears all night, and the morning brought him nothing but flat despair. He resigned himself to his fate with the resolution of one who, however unwilling he might be to perish in such a manner, had yet faced death too frequently not to yield him a ready defiance now.

CHAPTER VII.

But hope had not utterly departed from the bosom of Selonee. Perhaps the destiny which had befallen himself had made him resolve the more earnestly to seek farther into the mystery of that which hung above the fate of his friend. The day which saw him enter the cabin of Macourah saw him the most miserable man alive. The hateful hag, hateful enough as the wife of his friend, whose ill treatment was notorious, was now doubly hateful to him as his own wife; and now, when, alone together, she threw aside the harsh and termagant features which had before distinguished her deportment, and, assuming others of a more amorous complexion, threw her arms about the neck of the youth and solicited his endearments, a loathing sensation of disgust was coupled with the hate which had previously possessed his mind. Flinging away from her embrace, he rushed out of the lodge with feelings of the most unspeakable bitterness and grief, and bending his way towards the forest, soon lost sight of the encampment of his people. Selonee was resolved on making another effort for the recovery of his friend. His resolve went even farther than this. He was bent never to return to the doom which had been fastened upon him, and to pursue his way into more distant and unknown forests —a self-doomed exile—unless he could restore Conattee to the nation. Steeled against all those ties of love or of country, which at one time had prevailed in his bosom over all, he now surrendered himself to friendship or despair. In Catawba, unless he restored Conattee, he could have no hope; and without Catawba he had neither hope nor love. On either hand he saw nothing but misery; but the worst form of misery lay behind him in the lodge of Macourah. But Macourah was not the person to submit to such a determination. She was too well satisfied with the exchange with which fortune had provided her, to suffer its gift to be lost so easily; and when Selonee darted from the cabin in such fearful haste, she readily conjectured his determination.

She hurried after him with all possible speed, little doubting that those thunders—could she overtake him—with which she had so frequently overawed the pliant Conattee, would possess an effect not less influential upon his more youthful successor. Macourah was gaunt as a greyhound, and scarcely less fleet of foot. Besides, she was as tough as a grey-squirrel in his thirteenth year. She did not despair of overtaking Selonee, provided she suffered him not to know that she was upon his trail. Her first movements therefore were marked with caution. Having watched his first direction, she divined his aim to return to the hunting grounds where he had lost or slain his companion; and these hunting grounds were almost as well known to herself as to him. With a rapidity of movement, and a tenacity of purpose, which could only be accounted for by a reference to that wild passion which Selonee had unconsciously inspired in her bosom for himself, she followed his departing footsteps; and when, the next day, he heard her shouts behind him, he was absolutely confounded. But it was with a feeling of surprise and not of dissatisfaction that he heard her voice. He—good youth—regarding Conattee as one of the very worthiest of the Catawba warriors, seemed to have been impressed with an idea that such also was the opinion of his wife. He little dreamed that she had any real design upon himself; and believed that, to show her the evidences which were to be seen, which led to the fate of her husband, might serve to convince her that not only he was not the murderer, but that Conattee might not, indeed, be murdered at all. He coolly waited her approach, therefore, and proceeded to renew his statements, accompanying his narrative with the expression of the hope which he entertained of again restoring her husband to herself and the nation. But she answered his speech only with upbraidings and entreaties; and when she failed, she proceeded to thump him lustily with the wand by which she had compelled him to follow her to the lodge the day before. But Selonee was in no humour to obey the laws of the nation now. The feeling of degradation which had followed in his mind, from the moment when he left the spot where he had stood up for death, having neither fear nor shame, was too fresh in his consciousness to suffer him to yield a like acknowledgment to it now; and though sorely tempted to

pummel the Jezabel in return for the lusty thwacks which she had already inflicted upon his shoulders, he forbore, in consideration of his friend, and contented himself with simply setting forward on his progress, determined to elude her pursuit by an exercise of all his vigour and elasticity. Selonee was hardy as the grisly bear, and fleeter than the wild turkey; and Macourah, virago as she was, soon discovered the difference in the chase when Selonee put forth his strength and spirit. She followed with all her pertinacity, quickened as it was by an increase of fury at that presumption which had ventured to disobey her commands; but Selonee fled faster than she pursued, and every additional moment served to increase the space botween them. The hunter lost her from his heels at length, and deemed himself fortunate that she was no longer in sight and hearing, when he again approached the spot where his friend had so mysteriously disappeared. Here he renewed his search with a painful care and minuteness, which the imprisoned Conattee all the while beheld. Once more Selonee crawled beneath those sprawling limbs and spreading arms that wrapped up in their solid and coarse rinds the person of the warrior. Once more he emerged from the spot disappointed and hopeless. This he had hardly done when, to the great horror of the captive, and the annoyance of Selonee, the shrill shrieks and screams of the too well-known voice of Macourah rang through the forests. Selonee dashed forward as he heard the sounds, and when Macourah reached the spot, which she did unerringly in following his trail, the youth was already out of sight.

"I can go no further," cried the woman—"a curse on him and a curse on Conattee, since in losing one I have lost both. I am too faint to follow. As for Selonee, may the one-eyed witch of Tustenuggee take him for her dog."

With this delicate imprecation, the virago seated herself in a state of exhaustion upon the inviting bed of moss which formed the lap of Conattee. This she had no sooner done, than the branches relaxed their hold upon the limbs of her husband. The moment was too precious for delay, and sliding from under her with an adroitness and strength which were beyond her powers of prevention, and, indeed, quite too sudden for any effort at re-

sistance, she had the consternation to behold her husband starting up in full life before her, and, with the instinct of his former condition, preparing to take to flight. She cried to him, but he fled the faster—she strove to follow him, but the branches which had relaxed their hold upon her husband had resumed their contracted grasp upon her limbs. The brown bark was already forming above her on every hand, and her tongue, allotted a brief term of liberty, was alone free to assail him. But she had spoken but few words when the bark encased her jaws, and the ugly thorn of the vine which had so distressed Conattee, had taken its place at their portals.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE husband looked back but once, when the voice ceased—then, with a shivering sort of joy that his own doom had undergone a termination, which he now felt to be doubly fortunate—he made a wide circuit that he might avoid the fatal neighbourhood, and pushed on in pursuit of his friend, whom his eyes, even when he was surrounded in the tree, had followed in his flight. It was no easy task, however, to overtake Selonee, flying, as he did, from the supposed pursuit of the termagant. Great however was the joy of the young warriors when they did encounter, and long and fervent was their mutual embrace. Conattee described his misfortunes, and related the manner in which he was taken; showed how the bark had encased his limbs, and how the intricate magic had even engrossed his knife and the wolf skin which had been the trophy of his victory. But Conattee said not a word of his wife and her entrapment, and Selonee was left in the conviction that his companion owed his escape from the toils to some hidden change in the tyrannical mood of Tustenuggee, or the one-eyed woman, his wife.

"But the skin and the knife, Conattee, let us not leave them," said Selonee, "let us go back and extricate them from the tree."

Conattee showed some reluctance. He soon said, in the words of Macbeth, which he did not use however as a quotation, "I'll go no more." But Selonee, who ascribed this reluctance to very natural apprehensions of the demon from whose clutches he had just made his escape, declared his readiness to undertake the adventure if Conattee would only point out to his eyes the particular excrescence in which the articles were enclosed. When the husband perceived that his friend was resolute, he made a merit of necessity.

"If the thing is to be done," said he, "why should you have the risk, I myself will do it. It would be a woman-fear were I to shrink from the danger. Let us go."

The process of reasoning by which Conattee came to this determination was a very sudden one, and one, too, that will not be hard to comprehend by every husband in his situation. It was his fear that if Selonee undertook the business, an unlucky or misdirected stroke of his knife might sever a limb, or remove some portions of the bark which did not merit or need removal. Conattee trembled at the very idea of the revelations which might follow such an unhappy result. Strengthening himself, therefore, with all his energies, he went forward with Selonee to the spot, and while the latter looked on and witnessed the operation, he proceeded with a nicety and care which amused and surprised Selonee, to the excision of the swollen scab upon the tree in which he had seen his wolf skin encompassed. While he performed the operation, which he did as cautiously as if it had been the extraction of a mote from the eye of a virgin; the beldam in the tree, conscious of all his movements, and at first flattered with the hope that he was working for her extrication, maintained the most ceaseless efforts of her tongue and limbs, but without avail. Her slight breathing, which Conattee knew where to look for, more like the sighs of an infant zephyr than the efforts of a human bosom, denoted to his ears an overpowering but fortunately suppressed volcano within; and his heart leaped with a new joy, which had been unknown to it for many years before, when he thought that he was now safe, and, he trusted, for ever, from any of the tortures which he had been fain to endure patiently so long. When he had finished the operation by which he had re-obtained his treasures, he ventured upon an impertinence which spoke surprisingly for his sudden acquisition of confidence; and looking up through the little aperture in the bark, from whence he had seen every thing while in the same situation, and from whence he concluded she was also suffered to see, he took a peep—a quick, quizzical and taunting peep, at those eyes which he had not so dared to offend before. He drew back suddenly from the contact—so suddenly, indeed, that Selonee, who saw the proceeding, but had no idea of the truth, thought he had been stung by some insect, and questioned him accordingly.

"Let us be off, Selonee," was the hurried answer, "we have nothing to wait for now."

"Yes," replied Selonee, "and I had forgotten to say to you that your wife, Macourah, is on her way in search of you. I left her but a little ways behind, and thought to find her here. I suppose she is tired, however, and is resting by the way."

"Let her rest," said Conattee, "which is an indulgence much greater than any she ever accorded me. She will find me out soon enough, without making it needful that I should go in search of her. Come."

Selonee kindly suppressed the history of the transactions which had taken place in the village during the time when the hunter was supposed to be dead; but Conattee heard the facts from other quarters, and loved Selonee the better for the sympathy he had shown, not only in coming again to seek for him, but in not loving his wife better than he did himself. They returned to the village, and every body was rejoiced to behold the return of the hunters. As for the termagant Macourah, nobody but Conattee knew her fate; and he, like a wise man, kept his secret until there was no danger of its being made use of to rescue her from her predicament. Years had passed, and Conattee had found among the young squaws one that pleased him much better than the old. He had several children by her, and years and honours had alike fallen numerously upon his head, when, one day, one of his own sons, while hunting in the same woods, knocked off one of the limbs of the Chair of Tustenuggee, and to his great horror discovered the human arm which they enveloped. This led him to search farther, and limb after limb became detached under the unscrupulous action of his hatchet, until the entire but unconnected members of the old squaw became visible. The lad knocked about the fragments with little scruple, never dreaming how near was his relation to the form which he treated with so little veneration. When he came home to the lodge and told his story, Selonee looked at Conattee, but said nothing. The whole truth was at once apparent to his mind. Conattee, though he still kept his secret, was seized with a sudden fit of piety, and taking his sons with him, he proceeded to the spot which he well remembered, and, gathering up the bleached remains, had them carefully buried in the trenches of the tribe.

It may properly end this story, to say that Selonee wedded the

sweet girl who, though willing to die herself to prevent him from marrying Macourah, yet positively refused to take his life to defeat the same event. It may be well to state, in addition, that the only reason Conattee ever had for believing that Selonee had not kept his secret from every body, was that Medoree, the young wife of the latter, looked on him with a very decided coolness. "But, we will see," muttered Conattee as he felt this conviction. "Selonee will repent of this confidence, since now it will never be possible for him to persuade her to take a seat in the Arm-chair of Tustenuggee. Had he been a wise man he would have kept his secret, and then there would have been no difficulty in getting rid of a wicked wife."

THE SNAKE OF THE CABIN.

CHAPTER I.

"THEY talk," said the stranger somewhat abruptly, "They talk of the crimes of wealthy people, and in high life. No doubt there are very great and many wrong doers among the rich. People in possession of much wealth, and seeing how greatly it is worshipped, will very naturally presume upon and abuse its powers;—but it is not among the rich only, and in the great city, that these things happen. The same snake, or one very much like it, winds his way into the wigwam and the cabin—and the poor silly country girl is as frequently the victim, as the dashing lady of the city and city fashions. For that matter she is the more easily liable to imposition, as are all persons who occupy insulated positions, and see little of the great struggles of busy life. The planter and the farmer who dwell in the remote interior find the face of the visitor too interesting, to scrutinize it very closely. A pleasant deportment, a specious outside, a gentle and attractive manner, will win their way in our forest world, without rendering necessary those formal assurances, that rigid introduction, and those guaranties of well known persons, which the citizen requires before you partake of his bread and salt. With us, on the contrary, we confide readily; and the cunning stranger, whom other communities have expelled with loathing, rendered cautious and conciliatory by previous defeat, adopts the subtlety of the snake, and winds his way as artfully as that reptile, when he comes among us. We have too many sad stories of this sort. Yours is one of them. This poor girl, Ellen Ramsay, was abused thus, as I have shown you, by this scoundrel, Stanton. But finish your narrative. She had a short time of it, and a sad one, I do not doubt, with a creature so heartless and so vile."

"But a poor eleven months; and the change was too rapid," said young Atkins, "not to let us see that she was any thing but happy. To-day, the gayest of all God's creatures, as much like a merry bird in spring-time, singing over its young;—to-morrow as gloomy and miserable as if there was neither song nor sunshine in God's whole earth."

"Poor thing!" exclaimed Walter.

"It was the shortest life," said the other, "to begin so well, that I ever saw, and the story which you have heard is pretty much the truth."

"But the funeral?" said Walter.

"Ah! that was not exactly as you heard it," was the reply of Atkins. "I was at the funeral of Ellen Ramsay, as indeed was very nearly all the village, and I could refer you to twenty who will tell you the matter just as it occurred. In the first place, it is not true that any body expected Robert Anderson to be present. He sent no message of any kind to Stanton. It was very well known that he was sick—actually in bed, and had been so for more than a week before the death of Ellen. People almost thought they might go off together. There was a sort of sympathy between them, though I don't think, from the hour of her unlucky marriage, that the eyes of the two ever met, till they met in the world of spirits—unless it were, indeed, in their dreams. But they seemed to pine away, both of them, about the same time, and though he stood it longest, he did not outlast her much. When she died, as I tell you, he was very feeble and in bed. Nobody ever expected him to leave it alive, and least of all that he should leave it then, to stand among the people at her grave. The circumstances of her marriage with Stanton, were too notorious, and too much calculated to embitter his feelings and his peace, to make it likely that he would be present at such a scene. She had cast him off, slightingly, to give a preference to the more showy stranger, and she had spoken to him in a manner not soon to be forgiven by a man of sensibility. But he did forgive—that I know—and his love for Ellen was unimpaired to the last. She did not doubt this, when she married Stanton, though she expressed herself so. That was only to find some excuses to him, if not to her own conscience, for her conduct. I'm sure she bitterly re-

pented of all before very long. She was just the girl to do wrong in a hurry, and be sorry for it the next minute."

"But the funeral?" said Walter.

"Ah! true—the funeral. Well, as I was telling you, when the coffin was brought round to the burial place—you know the spot, among a thick grove of stunted oaks, and the undergrowth is always kept down by old Ramsay—who should come out from behind one of the largest old trees, but Robert Anderson. He was pale as a ghost, and his limbs trembled and tottered as he walked, but he came forward as resolutely as if he felt no pain or weakness. Stanton started when he saw him. He never expected his presence, I assure you. Every eye saw his agitation as Robert came forward; and I tell you, there was not a person present who did not see, as well as myself, that the husband of the poor girl looked much paler at that moment than her sick lover. Robert did not seem to see Stanton, or to mind him as he came forward; indeed, he did not seem to see any body. His eyes were fixed only on the coffin, which was carried by me, Ralph Mason, Dick Rawlins, and I think Hiram Barker. He did not shed a tear, which we all wondered at, for all of us expected to see him crying like any child, because we knew how soft-hearted he always was, and how fond he had been of Ellen. At first, we thought his not crying was because of his anger at being so ill-treated, which was natural enough; but what he said afterwards soon did away with that notion. He came close to my side, and put his hand on the lid of the coffin near the name, and though he said not a single word to us, we seemed to understand that he meant we should stop till he read it. We did stop, and he then read the plate aloud, something in this manner—'Ellen'—and then he stopped a little as he came to the word 'Stanton'—and you could see a deep red flush grow out upon his cheek and forehead, and then he grew pale as death—and held upon the coffin as if to keep himself from falling—then he seemed to muster up strength, and he read on, in very deliberate and full accents, as if he had thrown all his resolution into the effort—'Ellen Stanton!' These words he repeated twice, and then he passed on to the rest—'WIFE OF GEORGE STANTON, BORN APRIL 7, 1817. DIED,'—Here he stopped again, poor fellow! as if to catch his

breath. He only gasped when he tried to go on with the reading. He could only say—'Died. Died!' and there he stopped like a man choking. By this time, Stanton came up close to him and looked at us, as if to say 'Why don't you go forward—why do you suffer him to stop you'—but he said nothing. Robert did not seem to mind or to notice him, but, with another effort, recovering his strength and voice, he read on to the end—'DIED MARCH 27, 1836—AGED EIGHTEEN YEARS, ELEVEN MONTHS AND NINETEEN DAYS.' Old John Ramsay by this time came up, and stood between him and Stanton. He looked up from the coffin, first at one and then at the other—and said quietly—without any appearance of anger or passion:"—

"This, Mr. Ramsay, is your daughter, Ellen—she was to have been my wife—she was engaged to me by her own promise, and you gave your consent to our marriage. Is not this true, Mr. Ramsay?"

"True," said the old man very mildly, but with a deep sigh that seemed to come from the bottom of his soul;—"but you know, Robert, ——"

Then it was that Robert seemed to lose himself for a moment. His eye brightened with indignation and his speech came quick.

"I know that she is *here!*" he exclaimed—"here, in her coffin, dead to you, your daughter—dead to me, my wife—your Ellen! my Ellen!—My Ellen—my poor Ellen!" And then he sobbed bitterly upon the coffin. I believe that most of the persons present—and all had crowded round us—sobbed too. But I could not see them, for my own heart was overflowing. The interruption did not continue long. Robert was the first to recover himself. He had always a right idea of what was proper; and no doubt, just then, he felt, that, according to the world's way of thinking, he was doing wrong in stopping the dead in its last progress to the place of rest. He raised up his head from the coffin plate, and said to us, speaking very slowly, for his breath seemed only to come in sobs, and then after great efforts—

"Do not think, my friends, when I speak of the pledges Ellen Ramsay made to me, that I am come here to utter any reproaches of the dead, or to breathe a single syllable of complaint against the blessed creature, who was always a sweet angel, now looking up

in heaven. God forbid that I should speak, or that you should hear, any harm of a woman that I have always looked upon as the purest and truest-hearted creature under the sun. No! in telling you of this pledge, I come here only to acquit her of any wrong, or evil thought, or action, when she ceased to think it binding upon her. It is to say to you at her grave, for you all knew that we were to be married, that, as I never gave her any reason for believing me to be false, or more unworthy of her heart than when she promised it to me, so, also, I believe that nothing but some such persuasion could have made her deprive me of it. While I acquit her, therefore, of having done me any intentional injustice, I tell you, in the presence of her heavenly spirit, which knows the truth of what I declare, that she has been abused by some false slanderer, to do me wrong, and herself wrong, and to—"

By this time Stanton put in, and stopped whatever more Robert had to say. He had been getting more and more angry as Robert went on, and when he came to that solemn part about the slanderer, and lifted his hands to heaven and looked upward with the tears just beginning to come into his eyes, as if he did really see the spirit of Ellen at the moment above him, then Stanton got quite furious. Those words clinched him in the sore part of his soul; and he made round the coffin towards where Robert stood, and doubled his fists, and spoke hoarsely, as if he was about to choke.

"And who do you mean slandered you to her?" he cried to Robert, "who! who!"

His face was as black as night, and his features, usually so soft and pleasing to the eyes of the young women, now looked rather like those of a devil than of a mortal man. We thought he would have torn the poor young man to pieces, but Robert did not seem at all daunted. I suppose if we had not been there, and had not interfered so quickly, there would have been violence; and violence upon a frail, dying creature like Robert, would have been the most shocking cruelty. But Maxcy jumped in between them, and John Ramsay, Ellen's youngest brother, stepped forward also, and we all cried "shame," and this drove Stanton back, but he still looked furious and threatening, and seemed to wish

for nothing more than to take Robert by the throat. Nobody seemed to mind him less than the poor fellow who had most reason to fear. Robert had a bold and fearless spirit, and there was a time, before he grew sickly and religious, when he would have grappled with him for death and life before the altar itself. But he was now subdued. He did not seem to mind his enemy, or indeed, any thing, but the coffin on which he hung. He did not, I really think, hear Stanton speaking at all, though, for a few moments, the fellow bullied pretty loud, and not a syllable that he said escaped any body else. His soul seemed to be in the coffin. His eyes seemed to try to pierce the heavy lid of pine, and the dark crape, and the shroud; and one would think, from the eager and satisfied gaze, that he had succeeded in doing so. No doubt his mind deluded him, and he thought so—for you could hear him whispering—"Ellen! dear Ellen!" Then he gave way to us, and reading the plate, he said—"But eighteen—but eighteen. But—it is all well now! all well!" He suffered us then to go forward, and followed close, and made no objection, and said no more words. While we let the coffin down, he stood so nigh, that the earth shelved with him, and he would have gone in with it, for he made no resistance, if we had not caught him in our arms and dragged him from the brink. But we could not soon get him from the spot. When all was done, he did not seem to mind that the rest were going, but stood looking down as earnestly as if he could still read the writing through six feet of earth. Stanton, too, did not seem willing to go, but we very well knew it was for no love he had for the poor girl that he wished to remain; and Maxcy whispered to me that he would bring him off before he left the ground, for fear he might do some harm to Robert, who was no fighter, and was too feeble to stand one so strong. This he did, and after he was gone I tried to get Robert away also. It was some time before I did so, and then it seemed he went with me only to get rid of my presence, for he was back at the grave as soon as night set in, and there he might be found every evening at the same hour, just about sunset, for several months afterwards—for he lingered strangely—until they brought him to sleep beside her. Though sick, and pining away fast, the poor fellow never let an evening go by, whatever weather it might be, with-

out paying the grave a visit; and, one day, perhaps two weeks after the funeral, old Mrs. Anderson called me into her cottage as I was riding by, and said she would show me something. She took me up into her son's room, a little chamber in the loft, and what should it be but a head-board, that the dying lad had sawed out with his own hands, from a thick plank, and had smoothed, and planed, and painted, all in secret, so that he could print on it an inscription for the poor girl's grave; and you would be surprised to see how neatly he had worked it all. The poor old woman cried bitterly all the time, but you could still see how proud she was of her son. She showed me his books—he had more than a hundred—and she sighed from the bottom of her heart when she told me it was the books that has made him sickly.

"But he will read," she said, "say all I can; though he knows it's a-doing him no good. 'Ah, mother,' he says, when I tell him about it, 'though it may shorten my life to read, it will shorten my happiness not to read, and I have too little happiness now left me to be willing to lose any of it.' And when he speaks so," said the old woman, "I can't blame him, for I know it's all true. But I blame myself, Mr. Atkins, for you see it was all of my doing that he got so many books, and is so fond of them. I loved to see him learning, and made him read to me so constantly of an evening, and it did my heart so much good to think that one day my Robert might be a great lawyer, or a parson, for I could see how much smarter he was than all the other boys of the village—and so I never looked at his pale cheeks, and had no guess how poorly he was getting, till, all of a sudden, he was laid up, on my hands, and pining away every hour, as you now see him. Things looked better for a while when he got fond of Ellen Ramsay, and she of him. But that Stanton, ever since he came among us, Robert has gone backward, and I shan't wonder if it's not very long before he wants his own tombstone!"

Poor old woman! I saw in a corner, half hidden behind an old trunk in the youth's chamber, what it was evident she had not seen, a head board, the very fellow to that which he had been making for Ellen!—but I said nothing to her at the time. When they were found after his death—for he said nothing of them while he lived—they were both neatly finished, with a simple but

proper inscription. On his own was but one line above his name. It was this—

"Mine *was* wo, but mine *is* hope.
Robert Anderson."

"You tell me of a remarkable young man," said Walter—"and he was but twenty when he died?"

"No more!"

"We will go and look upon his grave."

"You will see the head board there, but that for Ellen was never put up—Stanton would not allow it."

"Ah! but we shall mend that. I will pluck that scoundrel's comb. Is the head-board preserved?"

"It is: his mother keeps it in his chamber, standing up beside his little book-case; but see, yonder is Stanton now. He is on his way to Ramsay's house. They do not live together. He boards at a little farm-yard about a mile from the village. They say that there has been a quarrel between him and his brother-in-law, young John Ramsay, something about his sister's property. There are eleven negroes which were owned by young John and herself, in their own right, from the grand-mother's gift, which they have suffered the old man to work until now. Stanton wants a division, and young John tried to persuade him not to touch them till his death, which must happen before long, he sharing as before from the crop. But Stanton persists, and the young fellow did not stop to tell him that he thought him a cruelly base fellow. This is the report. It is very certain that they are separate now, and there is a difference between them."

"Very likely on the score of the negroes. But we will save them to the old man, and drive him from a spot which he had made wretched."

"Can you do this? Are your proofs sufficient?"

"Ample."

"You are yourself a lawyer?"

"Yes! But I shall have the assistance, if necessary, of Col. Dawson, whom probably you know."

"A first rate gentleman, and one of our best lawyers."

"I bring letters to him—have already seen him on the subject,

and he concurs with me as to the conclusiveness of my proofs. Would I had been with you a year ago. Could I have traced him, this poor girl had not been his victim. I should at least have driven the snake from this one cabin."

"Yes, if you had come a year ago, poor Ellen would have been saved. But nothing could have saved the poor young man. The rot was in the heart of the tree."

"Yet!" said the other, putting his hand upon the arm of Atkins —"though the tree perished, it might have been kept green to the last. Some hurts might have been spared it. The man who died in hope, might not have found it necessary to declare, at the last moment, that he had utterly lived in wo. Yes—a little year ago, we might have done much for both parties."

"You will do great good by your coming now. The poor old man loves his negroes as he does his children. They say he looks upon the giving up the eleven to be sold, like a breaking up of the establishment. His son says it will hurry him to the grave. This was what he said to Stanton, which led to the quarrel. Stanton sneered at the young man, and he, being pretty passionate, blazed out at him in a way that pretty soon silenced the fellow."

"This class of reptiles are all, more or less, cowards. We must not burn daylight, as, if they consent to a division, the scoundrel may make off with his share. Let us go forward," continued the speaker, with a show of feeling for which Atkins could not well account—"I long to tread upon the viper—to bruise his head, and above all to tear the fangs from his jaws. You will, if Stanton be there, draw the old man aside and introduce me to him, with some quiet hint of what I may be able to do."

"You say you have the papers with you?"

"Ay, ay,—here,"—striking his bosom—"I have here that which shall confound him! Fear not! I do not deceive you. At least I cannot deceive myself. I too have wrongs that need avenging—I and mine! I and mine! Remember, I am Mr. Jones from Tennessee—I must surprise and confound the fellow, and would see how the land lies before I declare myself."

CHAPTER II.

YOUNG John Ramsay was in the front piazza as they entered the little farm-yard. He was alone, and pacing the floor in evident agitation. His brow was dark and discontented, and he met the salutations of his visitors with the manner of a person who is ill pleased with any witnesses of his disquiet. But he was civil, and when Atkins asked after his father, he led the way into the house, and there they discovered the old man and George Stanton in close and earnest conversation. Several papers were before them, and Stanton held the pen in his hand. The tears stood in old Ramsay's eyes. His thin white hairs, which fell, glossy and long, upon his shoulders, gave a benign and patriarchal expression to a face that was otherwise marked with the characters of benevolence and sensibility. He rose at the appearance of the visitors. Stanton did not, but looked up with the air of one vexed at interruption in the most interesting moment. Young Ramsay, to whom the stranger had been introduced by Atkins, introduced him in turn to his father, but to his father only. He gave no look to the spot where Stanton was seated. Atkins took the old man into another room, leaving the three remaining in the apartment. Stanton appeared to busy himself over his papers. Young Ramsay requested the stranger to be seated, and drew a chair for himself beside him. There was no conversation. The youth looked down upon the floor, in abstract contemplation, while the stranger, unobserved by either, employed himself in a most intense watch of the guilty man. The latter looked up and met this survey seemingly with indifference. He too was thinking of matters which led him somewhat from the present company. He resumed his study of the papers before him, and scarcely noticed the return of old Ramsay to the room. His appearance was the signal to the son to go out, and resume his solitary promenade in the piazza. The old man promptly approached the stranger, whose hand he took with a cordial pres-

sure that proved how well Atkins had conveyed his suggestion. There was a bright hopefulness in his old eyes, which, had it been seen by Stanton, might have surprised him, particularly as, just before, they had been overflowing with tears and clouded with despondency. He was, however, still too busy in his calculations, and possibly, in his own hopes, to note any peculiar change in the aspect or manner of his father-in-law. But when some minutes had passed, consumed by the old man and the stranger, in the most common-place conversation—when he heard the former institute long inquiries into the condition of crops in Tennessee—the value of grain, the modes of cultivation, the price of lands and negroes;—the impatient son-in-law began to show his restiveness. He took up and threw down his papers, turned from them to the company, from the company to the papers again, renewed his calculations, again dismissed them, and still without prompting the visitor to bring to a close a visit seemingly totally deficient in object and interest, but which, to his great annoyance, all parties besides himself seemed desirous to prolong. At length, as with a desperate determination, he turned to the old man and said—

"Sir—Mr. Ramsay, you are aware of my desire to bring this business to a close at once."

The words reached the ears of young Ramsay, who now appeared at the door.

"Father, pray let it be as this person desires. Give him all which the law will allow—give him more, if need be, and let him depart. Make any arrangement about the negroes that you please, without considering me—only let him leave us in our homes at peace!"

"I am sorry to disturb the peace of any home," said Stanton, "but am yet to know that to claim my rights is doing so. I ask nothing but what is fair and proper. My wife, if I understand it, had an equal right with Mr. John Ramsay, the younger, to certain negroes, eleven in number, namely, Zekiel, Abram, Ben, Bess, Maria, Susannah, Bob, Harry, Milly, Bainbridge and Nell, with their increase. This increase makes the number seventeen. But you have never denied the facts, and I repeat to you the

proposition which I have already made to you, to divide the property into two equal parts, thus:"—

Here he read from the strips of paper before him, enumerating the negroes in two lots—this done, he proceeded:

"I am willing that your son should have the first choice of these lots. I will take the other. I am prepared to listen to any other arrangement for a division, rather than be subject to any delay by a reference to the law. I have no wish to compel the sale of the property, as that might distress you."

"Distress!" exclaimed the young man—"spare your sympathy if you please. I consent to your first arrangement. Nay, sir, you shall choose, first, of the lots as divided by yourself. My simple wish now, sir, is to leave you wholly without complaint."

"But, my son"—began the old man.

"Pray, my father, let it be as I have said. We shall never have an end of it otherwise. The division is a tolerably equal one, and if there be any loss it is mine."

The old man folded his hands upon his lap and looked to the stranger. He, meanwhile, maintained a keen and eager watch upon the features of Stanton. It could be seen that his lip quivered and there was in his eye an expression of exultation and scorn which, perhaps, none perceived but young Atkins. Stanton, meanwhile, was again busy with his papers.

"It is admitted also," the latter continued, "that I have a right to one half of a tract of uncleared land, lying on the Tombeckbe, containing six hundred and thirty acres, more or less; to one half of a small dwelling house in Linden, and to certain household stuff, crockery, plate and kitchen ware. Upon these I am prepared to place a low estimate, so that the family may still retain them, and the value may be given me in negro property. I value the land, which I am told is quite as good as any in the country, at $5 an acre—the house and lot at $500—and the plate, crockery, kitchen ware, etc., at $250 more. I make the total of my share, at these estimates, to be $2075—we will say $2000—and I am willing to take in payment of this amount, the four fellows, Zekiel, Bob, Henry and Ben—named in one lot, or the two fellows, Abram and Bainbridge, and the two women, Milly and Maria, with their three children, named in the other parcel."

"You are extremely accommodating," said young Ramsay bitterly, "but I prefer that we should sell the land on the Tombeckbe, the lot in Linden, and the crockery, plate and kitchen stuff—unless you prefer that these last should be divided. This arrangement will occasion you some delay in getting your money, but it will save me much less loss than I should suffer by your estimates. Permit me to say that of the negroes in the lot which you may leave me, you shall not have a hair, and I would to God it were in my power to keep the rest, by any sacrifice, from your possession."

"No doubt you do, sir—but your wishes are not the law. I demand nothing from you but what is justice, and justice I will have. My rights are clear and ample. You do not, I trust, propose to go to law to keep me out of my wife's property."

"To law!" exclaimed the young man with indignation. He then strode fiercely across the floor and confronted Stanton, who had now risen. The strife in his soul was showing itself in storm upon his countenance, when the stranger from Tennessee rose, and placed himself between them.

"Stay, my friend—let me speak a moment. I have a question to ask of Mr. Stanton."

"You, sir"—said Stanton—"by what right do you interfere?"

"By the right which every honest man possesses to see that there is no wrong done to his neighbour, if he can prevent it. You are making a demand upon Mr. Ramsay, for certain property which you claim in right of your wife. Now, sir, let me ask which of your wives it is, on whose account you claim."

The person thus addressed recoiled as if he had been struck by an adder. A deep flush passed over his face, succeeded by an ashen paleness. He tried to speak, stammered, and sunk paralyzed back into his chair.

"What, sir, can you say nothing? Your rights by your wives ought to be numerous. You should have some in every State in the Union."

"You are a liar and a slanderer," exclaimed the criminal, rising from his seat, and, with a desperate effort, confronting his accuser—Shaking his fist at him, he cried—"You shall prove what you say! You shall prove what you say!"

The other coldly replied, while a smile of scorn passed over his lips—"I am here for that very purpose."

"You!—and who are you?" demanded the accused, once again stammering and showing trepidation.

"A man! one who has his hand upon your throat, and will stifle you in the very first struggle that you propose to make. Sit down, sir—sit down all—this business is opened before us, and we will go to it as to a matter of business. You, sir"—to Stanton, "will please school your moods and temper, lest it be worse for you. It is only by behaving with proper modesty under a proper sense of your position and danger, that you can hope to escape from the sharpest clutches of the law."

"You shall not bully me—I am not the man to submit ——"

"You are;" said the other, sternly interrupting him—"I tell you, William Ragin, *alias* Richard Weston, *alias* Thomas Stukely, *alias* Edward Stanton—you are the man to submit to all that I shall say to you, to all that I shall exact from you, in virtue of what I know of you, and in virtue of what you are."

The sweat poured in thick streams from the brow of the criminal. The other proceeded.

"I am not a bully. It is not by swagger that I hope to put you down, or to punish you. On the contrary, I come here prepared to prove all that I assert, satisfactorily before a court of justice. It is for you to determine whether, by your insolence and madness, you will incur the danger of a trial, or whether you will submit quietly to what we ask, and leave the country. I take for granted that you are no fool, though, in a moral point of view, your career would show you to be an enormous one, since vice like yours is almost conclusive against all human policy, and might reasonably be set down by a liberal judgment, as in some degree a wretched insanity. If I prove to you that I can prove to others what I now assert, will you be ready, without more ado, to yield your claims here, and every where, and fly the country?"

"You can prove nothing: you know nothing. I defy you."

"Beware! I am no trifler, and, by the God of heaven, I tell you, that, were I to trust my own feelings, you should swing upon the gallows, or be shut in from life, by a worse death, in the penitentiary, all your days. I can bring you to either, if I will it, but

there are considerations, due to the feelings of others, which prompt me to the gentler course I have indicated. It is enough for me that you have been connected by the most solemn ties with Maria Lacy. Her wishes and her memory are sacred in my sight, and these move me to spare the villain whom my own personal wrongs would prompt me to drag to the gallows. You see how the matter stands! Speak!"

"You then—you are ——"

"Henry Lamar, of Georgia, the cousin, and once the betrothed of Maria Lacy."

There was a slight tremour in the speaker's voice, as he made this answer;—but his soul was very firm. He continued: "I complain not of your wrong to me. It is enough that I am prepared to avenge it, and I frankly tell you, I am half indifferent whether you accede to my proposition or not. Your audacity here has aroused a feeling in me, which leaves it scarcely within my power to offer you the chances of escape. I renew the offer, while I am yet firm to do it. Leave the country—leave all the bounds, all the territories of the United States—and keep aloof from them; for, as surely as I have power to pursue, and hear of your presence in any of them, so surely shall I hunt you out with shot and halter, as I would the reptile that lurks beside the pathway, or the savage beast that harbours in the thicket."

The speaker paused, resumed his seat, and, by a strong effort of will, maintained a calm silence, looking sternly upon the criminal. Violent passions were contending in the breast of the latter. His fears were evidently aroused, but his cupidity was active. It was clear that he apprehended the danger—it was equally clear that he was loth to forego his grasp upon the property of his last victim. He was bewildered, and, more in his confusion than because of any thought or courage—he once more desperately denied the charges made against him.

"You are a bold man," said he to the stranger, affecting coolness—"considering you deal in slander. You may impose upon these, but it is only because they would believe any thing against me now. But you have no proofs. I defy you to produce any thing to substantiate one of your charges."

"Fool!" said the other coolly, "I have but to call in the slaves

—to have you stripped to the buff, and to discover and display to the world the marks upon your body, to which your wife swore in open court in New York State, on the trial of Reuben Moore, confounded in identity with yourself as William Ragin. Here is the report of the trial. Moore was only saved, so close was the general resemblance between you, as the scar of the scythe was not apparent upon his leg—to which all parties swore as certainly on yours. Are you willing that we should now examine your left leg and foot?"

"My foot is as free from scar as yours; but I will not suffer myself to be examined."

"Did it need, we should not ask you. But it does not need. We have the affidavit of Samuel Fisher, to show that he detected the scar of the scythe upon your leg, while bathing with you at Crookstone's mill pond, that he asked you how you got such a dreadful cut, and that you were confused, but said that it was a scythe cut. This he alleged of you under your present name of Stanton. Here, sir, is a copy of the affidavit. Here also is the testimony of James Greene, of Liberty county, Geo., who knew you there as the husband of Maria Lacy. He slept with you one night at Berry's house on the way to the county court house. You played *poker* with a party of five consisting of the said Greene, of Jennings, Folker and Stillman—their signatures are all here. You got drunk, quarrelled with Folker and Stillman, whom you accused of cheating you, were beaten by them severely, and so bruised that it was necessary you should be put to bed, and bathed with spirits. When stripped for this purpose, while you lay unconscious, the scythe cut on your leg, and a large scar from a burn upon your right arm, to both of which your wife, Elizabeth Ragin, swore in New York, with great particularity—as appears in that reported case—were discovered, and attracted the attention of all present."

"Man or devil!" exclaimed the criminal in desparation,—"By what means have you contrived to gather these damnable proofs!"

"You admit them then?"

"I admit nothing. I defy them, and you, and the devil. Let me go. I will hear nothing more—see nothing farther. As for you, John Ramsay, let me ask, am I to have any of my wife's

property? Let me have it, and I leave the cursed country forever."

John Ramsay, the younger, was about to reply, when the stranger silenced him.

"Stay! You leave not this spot, unless with my consent, or in the hands of the sheriff. He is here in readiness. Are you willing that I should call him in? I am serious! There must be no trifling. Here are proofs of your identity with William Ragin, who married Elizabeth Simpson, of Minden, Connecticut; —with Richard Weston, who married Sarah Gooch, of Raleigh, N. C.;—with Thomas Stukely, who married with Maria Lacy, of Liberty county, Geo.;—with Edward Stanton, now before us, who married with Ellen Ramsay, of Montgomery county, Alabama. Of these wretched wives whom you have wronged and dishonoured, two of them are still living. I do not stipulate for your return to either. They are sufficiently fortunate to be rid of you forever. But this I insist upon, that you leave the country. As for taking the property of this wife or that, you must consider yourself particularly fortunate that you escape the halter. You can take nothing. Your fate lies in these papers."

In an instant the desperate hands of the criminal had clutched the documents where the other laid them down. He clutched them, and sprang towards the door, but a single blow from the powerful fist of young John Ramsay brought him to the floor. The stranger quietly repossessed himself of the papers."

"You are insane, William Ragin," he remarked coolly—"these are all copies of the originals, and even were they originals, their loss would be of little value while all the witnesses are living. They are brought for your information—to show you on what a perilous point you stand—and have been used only to base the warrant upon which has been already issued for your arrest. That warrant is even now in this village in the hands of the sheriff of the county. I have but to say that you are the man whom he must arrest under it, and he does his duty. You are at my mercy. I see that you feel that. Rise and sign this paper and take your departure. If, after forty-eight hours, you are found east of the Tombeckbe, you forfeit all the chances which it affords you of escape. Rise, sir, and sign. I have no more words for you."

The criminal did as he was commanded—passively, as one in a stupor. The stranger then waved him to the door, and he took his departure without any more being spoken on either side. When he was gone—

"These papers," said Lamar, to old John Ramsay, "are yours. I leave them for your protection from this scoundrel. The proofs are all conclusive, and, with his re-appearance, you have but to seek the sheriff and renew the warrant."

The old man clasped the hands of the stranger and bedewed them with tears.

"You will stay with us while you are here. We owe you too much to suffer it otherwise. We have no other way of thanking you."

"I have another day's business here," said Lamar, "and will cheerfully partake your hospitality for that time. For the present I must leave you. I have an engagement with Mr. Atkins."

The engagement with Atkins, led the stranger to the grave of poor Ellen Ramsay and to that of Robert Anderson. They next visited the cottage of the widow Anderson, and obtained her consent to the use of the head board which the devoted youth had framed and inscribed, while himself dying, for the grave of his beloved. The next day was employed, with the consent of old Ramsay, in putting it up—an occasion which brought the villagers together as numerously as the burial of the poor girl had done. The events of the day had taken wind—the complete exposure of the wretch who had brought ruin and misery into the little settlement, was known to all, and deep were the imprecations of all upon his crime, and warm the congratulations at a development, which saved the venerable father from being spoiled and left in poverty in his declining years. But there is yet a finish to our story—another event, perhaps necessary to its finish, which, as it was the offspring of another day, we must reserve for another chapter.

CHAPTER III.

THAT night, while the little family at Ramsay's were sitting over their evening meal, Abram, one of the plantation negroes, appeared at the door of the apartment, and abruptly addressed young Ramsay after the following fashion:

"Look ya, Mass Jack, I want for see you out ya a minute."

Abram was the *driver* of the plantation—a sort of superintendant of details. He was a faithful negro, such as is to be found on every long established plantation at the South—shrewd, cool, sensible—perhaps forty years of age—honest, attentive to his business, and, from habit, assuming the interest which he managed to be entirely his own. His position gave him consequence, which he felt and asserted, but never abused. A trick of speaking very much what was uppermost in his mind, was the fruit of a just consciousness of duties well performed, leaving him in no fear of any proper authority. Young Ramsay rose instantly and obeyed the summons. With some little mystery in his manner, Abram conducted the youth from the piazza into the yard, and thence into the shadow of one of the gigantic shade trees by which the house was literally embowered. Here, looking around him with the air of one anxious neither to be seen nor overheard, he thrust a paper into the hands of John Ramsay with this inquiry—

"Dis ya money, Mass Jack,—good money?"

"I will tell you when I look at it by the candle. Why?—where did you get it?"

"You look at 'em first—I tell you all 'bout 'em arterward."

John did as was required, returned and reported the bank note—for it was such, and for twenty dollars—to be utterly worthless—that, in short, of a broken bank.

"I bin tink so," said the negro.

"Where did you get it, Abram?"

"Who you speck gib me, Mass Jack?"

"I don't know!"

"Who but Mass Ned Stanton."

"Ha!—why—when did he give you this money?"

"To-day—when you bin all busy wid de tomb stone of young Missis. He come by de old creek field, call me out, say I must come to em in de wood, and den he say to me dat he sorry for see me ya working for Mossa. Him will help me git off work—I shall be free man, if I will only go wid him, and bring off many of the brack people as I kin. He promise me heap of tings, git me 'nuff tobacco for las' a mont', gib me knife—see dis ya—and dis money which you say no good money. I bin speck 'em for bad when he tell me its twenty dollars. Twenty dollars is heap money, I say to myself. Wha' for he gib me twenty dollars now. Wha' for he consider my freedom, jes' now, and he nebber bin tink 'pon 'em before. Someting's wrong, I say to myself, and Mossa for know—but I neber let on to 'em I 'spec 'em. I say 'da's all right. I will come, Mass Ned. I will see you in de bush to-night.' Den he shake my hand—say he always bin lub me—will take me to country whay brack man is gentleman and hab white wife, and is lawyer, and schoolmosser, and preacher, and hab white man for dribe he carriage. I yerry em berry well, but I never le' him see I laugh. But I hab my tongue ya (thrust to one side of his jaws) and the white ob my eye grow large as I look 'pon 'em. I know 'em of ole. I bin speck 'em when he first come ya courting poor Miss Nelly. I no like 'em den—I no like 'em now. But I mak' blieb I lub 'em too much. Das for you now to fix 'em. He's for see me to-night by ole Robin tree in de swamp. Wha' mus do—wha' mus say—how you gwine fix 'em?"

"You have done right, 'Bram. Before I say any thing, I will consult my father, and a stranger who is with us."

"I yerry bout 'em. He's a man, I ya. Flora bin tell me how he fix Ned Stanton."

"Well, I'll consult him and my father. Do you remain here in the meantime. Do not let yourself be seen. Stanton *is* a villain, but we have found him out. Stanton is not his real name, *but Ragin.*"

"Ragin, eh? Well, we must Ragin 'em. I'll wait 'pon you

ya. But mak' haste—de time is pretty close, and he'll 'spec' somet'ing ef I aint by de tree when he come."

John Ramsay re-entered the house, and, in few words, repeated the substance of the negro's story.

"The scoundrel's bent on being hung," was the exclamation of Lamar, with something like a look of exultation. "Let 'Bram encourage him, and give him a meeting for to-morrow night, promising to bring all the negroes that he can. We shall be at the meeting. 'Bram shall carry us, though we go as his comrades, not as his superiors."

The scheme of Lamar was soon laid. Young Ramsay and himself were to smut their faces, and, in negro habiliments, were to impose upon the villain. Lamar promised that the sheriff should take his hand at the game.

"Our mercy is thrown away upon such a thrice-dyed scoundrel. His destiny forces the task of vengeance upon us. Go to Abram, and give him his cue."

CHAPTER IV.

THERE is a fatality about the wicked that, sooner or later, whatever may be their precautions and their adroitnesses, invariably brings about their confusion and defeat. The criminal in the present instance, was one who had enjoyed a long swing of good fortune—using these words only to mean that he had been able to gratify his wishes, of whatever sort, without yet having been made to pay the usual penalties. This very success is most commonly the source of final disaster. The fortunate man is apt to presume upon his good fortune—to hold himself, like Sylla, a sort of favourite with the capricious goddess, until he loses himself irrevocably in the blind presumption which his confidence provokes. Edward Stanton, for so we shall continue to call him, had been too often in straits like the present, and had too often emerged from them with profit, to fancy that he had much at hazard in the new game that he had determined to pursue. He had been temporarily daunted by the complete exposure of his career which had been made by Lamar, and felt, from all he saw and all he heard, that the chances were entirely up with him where he then stood. But he had not long gone from sight of his enemy, before his mind began once more to recover, and to unravel new schemes and contrivances for the satisfaction of his selfish passions. He was a person soon to cast aside his apprehensions, and to rise with new energies after defeat. It is a very great misfortune that this admirable quality of character should be equally shared, upon occasion, by the rogue and the ruffian, with the honest man and the noble citizen. Stanton was resolved to make the most of the forty-eight hours which were allowed him. He took for granted that, having attained his object, Lamar would be satisfied;—he may have discovered, indeed, that the latter would return in another day to Georgia. We have seen, from the revelations of Abram, what direction his scheming mind *was disposed* to pursue. His plans were laid in a few minutes,

and, while the family of Ramsay, its guest, and the people of the village generally, were raising the simple head board over the grave of his injured wife, the miserable wretch, totally insensible to all honourable or human feeling, was urging the ignorant negro to a desertion of the ancient homestead, in the vain hope of attaining that freedom with which, when acquired, he knew not well what to do. Of course, this was all a pretext of the swindler, by which to get the property within his grasp. He had but to cross the Tombeckbe with his unsuspecting companions, and they would have been sold, by public outcry, at the first popular gathering. His plans laid, his artifices all complete, he waited with anxiety the meeting with the negro. He had already taken his leave of the family with which he lodged, had mounted his horse, and turned his head towards the west, using particular care that his departure should be seen by several. He little fancied that his return to the neighbourhood by another route, and after night had set in, had also been perceived. But the vigilance of Lamar had arranged for this. Young Atkins had volunteered to observe the movements of Stanton, and, born a hunter, and familiar with all the woods for twenty miles round, he was able to report on the return of the fugitive, within half an hour of the moment when it took place. Concealing his horse in a neighbourng *bay*, ready for use in the first emergency, Stanton proceeded, at the appointed time, to the place of rendezvous.

Meanwhile, the preparations of Lamar were also in progress. The sheriff had been brought, after night-fall, to the house of old Ramsay. The coarse garments of the negro had been provided for himself and his deputy—for Lamar and the younger Ramsay. Young Atkins also insisted on going as a volunteer, and old Ramsay could with difficulty be persuaded to forbear accompanying the party. The blood of the veteran blazed up as fiercely as it had done twenty years before, when he heard the call for volunteers, from the lips of Andrew Jackson, to avenge the butcheries of Indian warfare. The good sense of Lamar succeeded in persuading him to leave the affair to younger men. Abram was of the party, and, with his assistance, a greasy preparation was procured, in which soot and oil were the chief ingredients, by

which our free citizens were made to assume, in a very few moments, the dark and glossy outside of the African. Prime stout fellows were they—able field hands—such as would delight the unsuspecting eye of the kidnapper as soon as he beheld them. They were all armed with pistols—all but Abram, who carried however the knife—a formidable *couteau de chasse*, which had been one of the bribes of Stanton, presented to him with the bank note and tobacco, at their first interview. Abram undertook the conduct of the party. They were led forth secretly, in profoundest silence, by a circuitous path, to the swamp thicket, in the neighbourhood of which the meeting was to take place. It is needless to describe the route. Suffice it that they were there in season, snugly quartered, and waiting with due impatience for the signal. It was heard at last;—a shrill whistle, thrice repeated, followed by the barking of a hound. To this Abram answered, going forth as he did so, and leaving the party in the close covert to which he had conducted them. The night was a bright star-light. The gleams, however, came but imperfectly through the thick foliage, and our conspirators could distinguish each other only by the sound of their voices. Their faces shone as glossily as the leaves, when suddenly touched by the far light of the stars. Gradually, they heard approaching footsteps. It was then that Lamar said, seizing the hand of young Ramsay,—

"No haste, now,—no rashness,—we must let the fellow hobble himself fairly."

Deep silence followed, broken only by the voice of the negro and his companion.

"You have brought them?" said Stanton.

"Da's ya!" replied the black.

"How many?"

"Some tree or four, 'side myself."

"Could you bring no more?" asked the eager kidnapper.

"Hab no chance—you no gib me time 'nuff. Ef you leff 'em tell Saturday night now, and Sunday, I get 'em all."

"No!—no! that's impossible. I dare not. These must do. Where are they?"

"In de bush! jes' ya! But look ya, Mass Ned, you sure you *gwine do* wha' you promise?"

"On my honour, 'Bram."

"You will take you Bible oat', Mass Ned?"

"I swear it."

"Dis ya nigger I bring you is no common nigger, I tell you. Mossa hab heaby loss for lose 'em. Wha' you 'spose he gwine say,—wha' he tink, when he get up to-morrow mornin', and can't find 'Bram and de rest ob 'em. Wha' he gwine do?"

"What can he do? We will have the start of him by twenty-five miles, and in one day more you will be free, 'Bram, your own master, and able to put him at defiance. I will see to that."

"He will push arter us, Mass Ned,—and dese ya nigger in de bush—look ya, Mass Ned, dese all prime nigger. Da's one on 'em, a gal ya, most purty nuff for white man wife. You 'member little Suzy, Mass Ned?"

"Don't I, 'Bram? Little Suzy is a pretty girl—pretty enough to be the wife of any man. Bring her out, bring them all out, and let us be off. We understand each other."

"Suzy is good gal, Mass Ned. I want for see 'em doing prime when he git he freedom. You will marry 'em yourself, wid parson?"

"If she wishes it."

"He will wish 'em for true! But wha' dis I yer 'em say 'bout you habing tree wife a'ready?"

"No more of that, 'Bram."

"Wha'! he aint true, den?"

"A lie, 'Bram! a black, a bloody lie!"

"What for den you let dat Georgy man run you out ob de country?"

"Ha! who told you this?"

"I yer dem house sarbant talk ob 'em."

"They do not understand it. I am not driven. I choose to go."

"Well! you know bes', but dat's wha' I yer dem say."

"No more, 'Bram! Where are the people?"

"Let de dog bark tree time, and dey come. You kin bark like dog, Mass Ned. Try for 'em."

The imitation was a good one. Sounds were heard in the

bushes, and one by one the supposed negroes appeared in the starlight. They looked natural enough, and the kidnapper approached them with some interest.

"These are all men, are they not? Are there no women? Where's Little Suzy?"

"Ha! Mass Ned,—I speck its true wha' dem people say. You lub gal too much. I call little Suzy now, him take you 'bout de neck. Come ya, my people. Mass Ned hab make 'greement wid me to carry us all to fine country. He swear Bible 'oat to make we all free, and gib we plenty whiskey and tobacco. I tell 'em you's ready to go. You ready, eh?"

There was a general grunt of assent.

'Bram was disposed to be satirical. His dry chuckle accompanied every syllable.

"Gib um you hand den on de bargain. Shake hand like brudderin. Ha! ha! I nebber bin speck to be brudder ob my young mossa. Shake hands, niggers, on de bargain."

"You have heard what 'Bram has said, my boys. I promise the same things to you. You shall go with me to a country where you shall be free. I will give you plenty of whiskey and tobacco. Here is my hand. Who is this—Zeke?"

The hand was clutched by Lamar, with a grasp that somewhat startled the criminal. The voice of the supposed negro in the next moment, terribly informed him of his danger.

"Villain!" exclaimed the Georgian, "I have you! You are sworn for the gallows! You shall not escape us now."

A short struggle followed—the doubtful light, and their rapid movements, not suffering the other persons around so to distinguish between them as to know where to take hold. The criminal put forth all his strength, which was far from inconsiderable. The combatants were nearly equally matched, but in the struggle they traversed a fallen tree, over which Lamar stumbled and fell, partly dragging his enemy with him to the ground. To save himself only did he relax his hold. Of this Stanton nimbly availed himself. He recovered his feet, and, before the rest of the party could interfere, had gained a dozen paces on his way to the thicket. *Once within its* shadows, he might, with good heart and good fortune, *have* baffled their pursuit. But this was not destined. He

was intercepted by no less a person than Abram, who rolled himself suddenly like a huge ball in the path of the fugitive, and thus broke the fall which yet precipitated him to the ground. In the next moment, the negro had caught him by the leg, yelling at the same time to the rest of the party to come to his succour.

"Ah! dog it is you then to whom I owe all this."

Such was the speech, muttered through his closed teeth, with which Stanton declared his recognition of the assailant. His words were followed by a pistol shot. Abram gave a cry, released his hold, and leapt to his feet. Stanton had only half risen when the whole weight of the negro was again upon him.

"You shoot, eh! You shoot!" were the words of the black, shrieked rather than spoken. The party interfered. The whole affair had passed in a moment, quick as thought, and in far less time than has been occupied with the recital.

"Where is he, 'Bram?" demanded Lamar.

"I hab em ya, Mossa—he safe," responded the other with a groan.

"You are hurt?" said young Ramsay, inquiringly.

"One arm smash wid he pistol, Mass Jack."

His young master helped the fellow up, while Lamar and the sheriff, with young Atkins, prepared to secure the criminal.

"What is this! He is lifeless!" said the former, as he touched the body. "What have you done, 'Bram?"

"I don't know, Mossa. I hab my knife in my han', and when he shoot me, I so bex and I so scare, I don't know wha' I do wid em. I gib um he knife, I speck. It's he own knife."

Sure enough! the weapon was still sticking in the side of the criminal. The one blow was fatal, and his dying groan, if any was uttered, was drowned in the furious exclamation with which the negro accompanied the blow.

"It is a loss to the gallows," said Lamar, with an expression of chagrin.

"Better so!" replied young Ramsay.

"It saves me a very dirty job!" muttered the sheriff. We may add that he took care to pay the usual fees to Abram, who was otherwise well provided for by the Ramsay family, and still lives to relate the events of that night of conflict with the Snake of the Cabin.

OAKATIBBE,

OR THE CHOCTAW SAMPSON.

CHAPTER I.

It was in the year 182–, that I first travelled in the vallies of the great south-west. Circumstances, influenced in no slight degree by an "errant disposition," beguiled me to the Choctaw nation, which, at that time, occupied the greater part of the space below the Tennessee line, lying between the rivers Tombeckbe and Mississippi, as low, nearly, as the town of Jackson, then, as now, the capital of the State of Mississippi. I loitered for several weeks in and about this region, without feeling the loss or the weight of time. Yet, the reader is not to suppose that travelling at that day was so simple a matter, or possessed many, if any of the pleasant facilities of the present. *Au contraire:* It was then a serious business. It meant *travail* rather than *travel.* The roads were few and very hard to find. Indian foot-paths—with the single exception of the great military traces laid out by General Jackson, and extending from Tennessee to Lake Ponchartrain—formed almost the only arteries known to the "Nation;" and the portions of settled country in the neighbourhood, nominally civilized only, were nearly in the same condition. Some of the Indian paths, as I experienced, seemed only to be made for the perplexity of the stranger. Like Gray's passages which "led to nothing," they constantly brought me to a stand. Sometimes they were swallowed up in swamps, and, in such cases, your future route upon the earth was to be discovered only by a deliberate and careful survey of the skies above. The openings in the trees over head alone instructed you in the course you

were to pursue. You may readily imagine that this sort of progress was as little pleasant as edifying, yet, in some respects, it was not wanting in its attractions, also. To the young and ardent mind, obstacles of this nature tend rather to excite than to depress. They contain the picturesque in themselves, at times, and always bring out the moral in the man. "To learn to rough it," is an educational phrase, in the dialect of the new countries, which would be of great service, adopted as a rule of government for the young in all. To "coon a log"—a mysterious process to the uninitiated—swim a river—experiment, at a guess, upon the properties of one, and the proprieties of another route—parley with an Indian after his own fashion—not to speak of a hundred other incidents which the civilized world does not often present—will reconcile a lad of sanguine temperament to a number of annoyances much more serious than will attend him on an expedition through our frontier countries.

It was at the close of a cloudy day in November, that I came within hail of the new but rude plantation settlements of Colonel Harris. He had but lately transferred his interests to Mississippi, from one of the "maternal thirteen"—had bought largely in the immediate neighbourhood of the Choctaw nation, and had also acquired, by purchase from the natives, certain reserves within it, to which he chiefly owes that large wealth, which, at this day, he has the reputation of possessing. In place of the stately residence which now adorns his homestead, there was then but a miserable log-house, one of the most ordinary of the country, in which, unaccompanied by his family, he held his temporary abiding place. His plantation was barely rescued from the dominions of nature. The trees were girdled only the previous winter, for his first crop, which was then upon the ground, and an excellent crop it was for that immature condition of his fields. There is no describing the melancholy aspect of such a settlement, seen in winter, on a cloudy day, and in the heart of an immense forest, through which you have travelled for miles, without glimpse of human form or habitation. The worm-fence is itself a gloomy spectacle, and the girdled trees, erect but dead, the perishing skeletons of recent life, impress you with sensations not entirely unlike those which you would experience in going over some

of a wife and two able-bodied daughters, planted himself directly behind this gentleman, and watched, with looks of growing sagacity, every stroke that was made in this—to him—volume of more than Egyptian mystery and hieroglyphics. Meanwhile, the squaws stood about their baskets with looks expressive of similar interest, but at the same time of laudable patience. The negroes in the rear, were scarcely less moved by curiosity, though a contemptuous grin might be seen on nearly all their countenances, as they felt their superiority in nearly every physical and intellectual respect, over the untutored savages. Many Indians were present who neither had nor sought employment. Of those employed, few or none were of middle age. But these were not wanting to the assemblage. They might be seen prowling about the rest—watchful of the concerns of their wives, sons and daughters, with just that sort and degree of interest, which the eagle may be supposed to feel, who, from his perch on the tree-top or the rock, beholds the fish-hawk dart into the water in pursuit of that prey which he meditates to rend from his jaws as soon as he shall re-ascend into the air. Their interest was decidedly greater than that of the poor labourer. It was in this manner that these vultures appropriated the fruits of his industry, and there was no remedy. They commonly interfered, the moment it was declared what was due to the *employée*, to resolve the pay into a certain number of gallons of whiskey; so many pounds of tobacco; so much gunpowder and lead. If the employer, as was the case with Col. Harris, refused to furnish them with whiskey, they required him to pay in money. With this, they soon made their way to one of those moral sinks, called a grog-shop, which English civilization is always ready to plant, as its first, most familiar, and most imposing standard, among the hills and forests of the savage.

It may be supposed that this experiment upon the inflexibility of Indian character and habit—for it was an experiment which had been in trial only a single week—was a subject of no little curiosity to me, as it would most probably be to almost every person at all impressed with the humiliating moral and social deterioration which has marked this fast decaying people. Could it possibly be successful? Could a race, proud, sullen, incommuni-

cative, wandering, be persuaded, even by gradual steps, and with the hope of certain compensation, to renounce the wild satisfaction afforded by their desultory and unconstrained modes of life? Could they be beguiled for a season into employments which, though they did not demand any severe labours, at least required pains-taking, regular industry, and that habitual attention to daily recurring tasks, which, to their roving nature, would make life a most monotonous and unattractive possession? How far the lightness of the labour and the simplicity of the employment, with the corresponding recompense, would reconcile them to its tasks, was the natural subject of my inquiry. On this head, my friend, Col. Harris, could only conjecture and speculate like myself. His experiment had been in progress but a few days. But our speculations led us to very different conclusions. He was a person of very ardent character, and sanguine, to the last degree, of the success of his project. He had no question but that the Indian, even at his present stage, might be brought under the influence of a judicious civilization. We both agreed that the first process was in procuring their labour—that this was the preliminary step, without taking which, no other could be made; but how to bring them to this was the question.

"They can be persuaded to this," was his conclusion. "Money, the popular god, is as potent with them as with our own people. They will do any thing for money. You see these now in the field. They have been there, and just as busy, and in the same number, from Monday last."

"How long will they continue?"

"As long as I can employ and pay them."

"Impossible! They will soon be dissatisfied. The men will consume and squander all the earnings of the females and the feeble. The very motive of their industry, money, to which you refer, will be lost to them after the first payment. I am convinced that a savage people, not as yet familiar with the elements of moral prudence, can only be brought to habitual labour, by the one process of coercion."

"We shall see. There is no coercion upon them now, yet they work with wonderful regularity."

"This week will end it. Savages are children in all but phys-

ical respects. To do any thing with them, you must place them in that position of responsibility, and teach them that law, without the due employment of which, any attempt to educate a child, must be an absurdity—you must teach them obedience. They must he made to know, at the outset, that they know nothing—that they must implicitly defer to the superior. This lesson they will never learn, so long as they possess the power, at any moment, to withdraw from his control."

"Yet, even were this to be allowed, there must be a limit. There must come a time when you will be required to emancipate them. In what circumstances will you find that time? You cannot keep them under this coercion always; when will you set them free?"

"When they are fit for freedom."

"How is that to be determined? Who shall decide their fitness?"

"Themselves; as in the case of the children of Israel. The children of Israel went out from bondage as soon as their own intellectual advancement had been such as to enable them to produce from their own ranks a leader like Moses:—one whose genius was equal to that of the people by whom they had been educated, and sufficient for their own proper government thereafter."

"But has not an experiment of this sort already been tried in our country?"

"Nay, I think not—I know of none."

"Yes: an Indian boy was taken in infancy from his parents, carried to one of the Northern States, trained in all the learning and habits of a Northern college and society, associated only with whites, beheld no manners, and heard no morals, but those which are known to Christian communities. His progress was satisfactory—he learned rapidly—was considered something of a prodigy, and graduated with eclât. He was then left, with the same option as the rest enjoyed, to the choice of a profession. And what was his choice? Do you not remember the beautiful little poem of Freneau on this subject? He chose the buck-skin leggins, the moccasins, bow and arrows, and the wide, wild forests, where his people dwelt."

"Freneau's poem tells the story somewhat differently. The

facts upon which it is founded, however, are, I believe, very much as you tell them. But what an experiment it was! How very silly! They take a copper-coloured boy from his people, and carry him, while yet an infant, to a remote region. Suppose, in order that the experiment may be fairly tried, that they withhold from him all knowledge of his origin. He is brought up precisely as the other lads around him. But what is the first discovery which he makes? That he is a copper-coloured boy—that he is, alone, the only copper-coloured boy—that wherever he turns he sees no likeness to himself. This begets his wonder, then his curiosity, and finally his suspicion. He soon understands—for his suspicion sharpens every faculty of observation—that he is an object of experiment. Nay, the most cautious policy in the world could never entirely keep this from a keen-thoughted urchin. His fellow pupils teach him this. He sees that, to them, he is an object of curiosity and study. They regard him, and he soon regards himself, as a creature set apart, and separated, for some peculiar purposes, from all the rest. A stern and singular sense of individuality and isolation is thus forced upon him. He asks —Am I, indeed, alone?—Who am I?—What am I?—These inquiries naturally occasion others. Does he read? Books give him the history of his race. Nay, his own story probably meets his eye in the newspapers. He learns that he is descended from a nation dwelling among the secret sources of the Susquehannah. He pries in all corners for information. The more secret his search, the more keenly does he pursue it. It becomes the great passion of his mind. He learns that his people are fierce warriors and famous hunters. He hears of their strifes with the white man—their successful strifes, when the nation could send forth its thousand bow-men, and the whites were few and feeble. Perhaps, the young pale faces around him, speak of his people, even now, as enemies; at least, as objects of suspicion, and perhaps antipathy. All these things tend to elevate and idealize, in his mind, the history of his people. He cherishes a sympathy, even beyond the natural desires of the heart, for the perishing race from which he feels himself, "like a limb, cast bleeding and torn." The curiosity to see his ancestry—the people of his tribe and country—would be the most natural feeling of the white boy,

under similar circumstances—shall we wonder that it is the predominant passion in the bosom of the Indian, whose very complexion forces him away from any connection with the rest! My idea of the experiment—if such a proceeding may be called an experiment—is soon spoken. As a statement of facts, I see nothing to provoke wonder. The result was the most natural thing in the world, and a man of ordinary powers of reflection might easily have predicted it, precisely as it happened. The only wonder is, that there should be found, among persons of common education and sagacity, men who should have undertaken such an experiment, and fancied that they were busy in a moral and philosophical problem."

"Why, how would you have the experiment tried?"

"As it was tried upon the Hebrews, upon the Saxons—upon every savage people who ever became civilized. It cannot be tried upon an individual: it must be tried upon a nation—at least upon a community, sustained by no succour from without—having no forests or foreign shores upon which to turn their eyes for sympathy—having no mode or hope of escape—under the full control of an already civilized people—and sufficiently numerous among themselves, to find sympathy, against those necessary rigours which at first will seem oppressive, but which will be the only hopeful process by which to enforce the work of improvement. They must find this sympathy from beholding others, like themselves in aspect, form, feature and condition, subject to the same unusual restraints. In this contemplation they will be content to pursue their labours under a restraint which they cannot displace. But the natural law must be satisfied. There must be opportunities yielded for the indulgence of the legitimate passions. The young of both sexes among the subjected people, must commune and form ties in obedience to the requisitions of nature and according to their national customs. What, if the Indian student, on whom the "experiment" was tried, had paid his addresses to a white maiden! What a revulsion of the moral and social sense would have followed his proposition in the mind of the Saxon damsel;—and, were she to consent, what a commotion in the community in which she lived. And this revulsion and commotion would have been perfectly natural, and, accord-

ingly, perfectly proper. God has made an obvious distinction between certain races of men, setting them apart, and requiring them to be kept so, by subjecting them to the resistance and rebuke of one of the most jealous sentinels of sense which we possess—the eye. The prejudices of this sense, require that the natural barriers should be maintained, and hence it becomes necessary that the race in subjection, should be sufficiently numerous to enable it to carry out the great object of every distinct community, though, perchance, it may happen to be an inferior one. In process of time, the beneficial and blessing effects of labour would be felt and understood by the most ignorant and savage of the race. Perhaps, not in one generation, or in two, but after the fifth and seventh, as it is written, "of those who keep my commandments." They would soon discover that, though compelled to toil, their toils neither enfeebled their strength nor impaired their happiness—that, on the contrary, they still resulted in their increasing strength, health, and comfort;—that their food, which before was precarious, depending on the caprices of the seasons, or the uncertainties of the chase, was now equally plentiful, wholesome and certain. They would also perceive that, instead of the sterility which is usually the destiny of all wandering tribes, and one of the processes by which they perish—the fecundity of their people was wonderfully increased. These discoveries—if time be allowed to make them—would tacitly reconcile them to that inferior position of their race, which is proper and inevitable, so long as their intellectual inferiority shall continue. And what would have been the effect upon our Indians—decidedly the noblest race of aborigines that the world has ever known—if, instead of buying their scalps at prices varying from five to fifty pounds each, we had conquered and subjected them? Will any one pretend to say that they would not have increased with the restraints and enforced toils of our superior genius?—that they would not, by this time, have formed a highly valuable and noble integral in the formation of our national strength and character? Perhaps their civilization would have been comparatively easy—the Hebrews required four hundred years—the Britons and Saxons, possibly, half that time after the Norman Conquest. Differing in colour from their conquerors, though I suspect, with a

natural genius superior to that of the ancient Britons, at the time of the Roman invasion under Julius Cæsar, the struggle between the two races must have continued for some longer time, but the union would have been finally effected, and then, as in the case of the Englishman, we should have possessed a race, in their progeny, which, in moral and physical structure, might have challenged competition with the world."

"Ay, but the difficulty would have been in the conquest."

"True, that would have been the difficulty. The American colonists were few in number and feeble in resource. The nations from which they emerged put forth none of their strength in sending them forth. Never were colonies so inadequately provided—so completely left to themselves; and hence the peculiar injustice and insolence of the subsequent exactions of the British, by which they required their colonies to support their schemes of aggrandizement and expenditure by submitting to extreme taxation. Do you suppose, if the early colonists had been powerful, that they would have ever deigned to treat for lands with the roving hordes of savages whom they found on the continent? Never! Their purchases and treaties were not for lands, but tolerance. They bought permission to remain without molestation. The amount professedly given for land, was simply a tribute paid to the superior strength of the Indian, precisely as we paid it to Algiers and the Musselmens, until we grew strong enough to whip them into respect. If, instead of a few ships and a few hundred men, timidly making their approaches along the shores of Manhattan, Penobscot and Ocracocke, some famous leader, like Æneas, had brought his entire people—suppose them to be the persecuted Irish—what a wondrous difference would have taken place. The Indians would have been subjected—would have sunk into their proper position of humility and dependence; and, by this time, might have united with their conquerors, producing, perhaps, along the great ridge of the Alleghany, the very noblest specimens of humanity, in mental and bodily stature, that the world has ever witnessed. The Indians were taught to be insolent by the fears and feebleness of the whites. They were flattered by fine words, by rich presents, and abundance of deference, until the ignorant savage, but a single degree above the

brute—who, until then, had never been sure of his porridge for more than a day ahead—took airs upon himself, and became one of the most conceited and arrogant lords in creation. The colonists grew wiser as they grew stronger; but the evil was already done, and we are reaping some of the bitter fruits, at this day, of seed unwisely sown in that. It may be that we shall yet see the experiment tried fairly."

"Ah, indeed—where?"

"In Mexico—by the Texians. Let the vain, capricious, ignorant, and dastardly wretches who now occupy and spoil the face and fortunes of the former country, persevere in pressing war upon those sturdy adventurers, and their doom is written. I *fear* it may be the sword—I *hope* it may be the milder fate of bondage and subjection. Such a fate would save, and raise them finally to a far higher condition than they have ever before enjoyed. Thirty thousand Texians, each with his horse and rifle, would soon make themselves masters of the city of Montezuma, and then may you see the experiment tried upon a scale sufficiently extensive to make it a fair one. But your Indian student, drawn from

"Susquehannah's farthest springs,"

and sent to Cambridge, would present you with some such moral picture as that of the prisoner described by Sterne. His chief employment, day by day, would consist in notching upon his stick, the undeviating record of his daily suffering. It would be to him an experiment almost as full of torture, as that of the Scottish Boot, the Spanish Thumb-screw—or any of those happy devices of ancient days, for impressing pleasant principles upon the mind, by impressing unpleasant feelings upon the thews, joints and sinews. I wish that some one of our writers, familiar with mental analysis, would make this poem of Freneau, the subject of a story. I think it would yield admirable material. To develope the thoughts and feelings of an Indian boy, taken from his people, ere yet he has formed such a knowledge of them, or of others, as to have begun to discuss or to compare their differences—follow him to a college such as that of Princeton or Cambridge—watch him within its walls—amid the crowd, but not of it—looking only within him-

self, while all others are looking into him, or trying to do so—surrounded by active, sharp-witted lads of the Anglo-Norman race; undergoing an hourly repeated series of moral spasms, as he hears them wantonly or thoughtlessly dwell upon the wild and ignorant people from whom he is chosen;—listening, though without seeming to listen, to their crude speculations upon the great problem which is to be solved only by seeing how well he can endure his spasms, and what use he will make of his philosophy if he survives it—then, when the toils of study and the tedious restraints and troubles of prayer and recitation are got over, to behold and describe the joy with which the happy wretch flings by his fetters, when he is dismissed from those walls which have witnessed his tortures—even supposing him to remain (which is very unlikely,) until his course of study is pronounced to be complete! With what curious pleasure will he stop in the shadow of the first deep forest, to tear from his limbs those garments which make him seem unlike his people! How quick will be the beating at his heart as he endeavours to dispose about his shoulders the blanket robe in the manner in which it is worn by the chief warrior of his tribe! With what keen effort—should he have had any previous knowledge of his kindred—will he seek to compel his memory to restore every, the slightest, custom or peculiarity which distinguished them when his eyes were first withdrawn from the parental tribe; and how closely will he imitate their indomitable pride and lofty, cold, superiority of look and gesture, as, at evening, he enters the native hamlet, and takes his seat in silence at the door of the Council House, waiting, without a word, for the summons of the Elders!"

"Quite a picture. I think with you, that, in good hands, such a subject would prove a very noble one."

"But the story would not finish here. Supposing all this to have taken place, just as we are told it did—supposing the boy to have graduated at college, and to have flung away the distinction—to have returned, as has been described, to his savage costume—to the homes and habits of his people;—it is not so clear that he will fling away all the lessons of wisdom, all the knowledge of facts, which he will have acquired from the tuition of the superior race. A natural instinct, which is above all lessons, must be complied

with; but this done—and when the first tumults of his blood have subsided, which led him to defeat the more immediate object of his social training—there will be a gradual resumption of the educational influence in his mind, and his intellectual habits will begin to exercise themselves anew. They will be provoked necessarily to this exercise by what he beholds around him. He will begin to perceive, in its true aspects, the wretchedness of that hunter-state, which, surveyed at a distance, appeared only the embodiment of stoical heroism and the most elevated pride. He will see and lament the squalid poverty of his people; which, his first lessons in civilization must have shown him, is due only to the mode of life and pursuits in which they are engaged. Their beastly intoxication will offend his tastes—their superstition and ignorance—the circumscribed limits of their capacity for judging of things and relations beyond the life of the bird or beast of prey—will awaken in him a sense of shame when he feels that they are his kindred. The insecurity of their liberties will awaken his fears, for he will instantly see that the great body of the people in every aboriginal nation are the veriest slaves in the world; and the degrading exhibitions which they make in their filth and drunkenness, which reduce the man to a loathesomeness of aspect which is never reached by the vilest beast which he hunts or scourges, will be beheld by the Indian student in very lively contrast with all that has met his eyes during that novitiate among the white sages, the processes of which have been to him so humiliating and painful. His memory reverts to that period with feelings of reconciliation. The torture is over, and the remembrance of former pain, endured with manly fortitude, is comparatively a pleasure. A necessary reaction in his mind takes place; and, agreeably to the laws of nature, what will, and what should follow, but that he will seek to become the tutor and the reformer of his people? They themselves will tacitly raise him to this position, for the man of the forest will defer even to the negro who has been educated by the white man. He will try to teach them habits of greater method and industry—he will overthrow the altars of their false gods—he will seek to bind the wandering tribes together under one head and in one nation—he will prescribe uniform laws of government.

He will succeed in some things—he will fail in others; he will offend the pride of the self-conceited and the mulish—the priesthood will be the first to declare against him—and he will be murdered most probably, as was Romulus, and afterwards deified. If he escapes this fate, he will yet, most likely, perish from mortification under failure, or, in consequence of those mental strifes which spring from that divided allegiance between the feelings belonging to his savage, and those which have had their origin in his christian schools—those natural strifes between the acquisitions of civilization on the one hand, and those instinct tendencies of the blood which distinguish his connection with the inferior race. In this conflict, he will, at length, when the enthusiasm of his youthful zeal has become chilled by frequent and unexpected defeat, falter, and finally fail. But will there be nothing done for his people? Who can say? I believe that no seed falls without profit by the wayside. Even if the truth produces no immediate fruits, it forms a moral manure which fertilizes the otherwise barren heart, in preparation for the more favourable season. The Indian student may fail, as his teachers did, in realizing the object for which he has striven; and this sort of failure, is, by the way, one of the most ordinary of human allotment. The desires of man's heart, by an especial Providence, that always wills him to act for the future, generally aim at something far beyond his own powers of performance. But the labour has not been taken in vain, in the progress of successive ages, which has achieved even a small part of its legitimate purposes. The Indian student has done for his people much more than the white man achieves ordinarily for his generation, if he has only secured to their use a single truth which they knew not before—if he has overthrown only one of their false gods—if he has smitten off the snaky head of only one of their superstitious prejudices. If he has added to their fields of corn a field of millet, he has induced one farther physical step towards moral improvement. Nay, if there be no other result, the very deference which they will have paid him, as the *elèvé* of the white man, will be a something gained of no little importance, towards inducing their more ready, though still tardy, adoption of the laws *and* guidance of the superior race."

CHAPTER II.

I AM afraid that my reader will suffer quite as much under this long discussion, as did my excellent companion, Col. Harris. But he is not to suppose that all the views here expressed, were uttered consecutively, as they are above set down. I have simply condensed, for more easy comprehension, the amount of a conversation which lasted some two hours. I may add, that, at the close, we discovered, as is very often the case among disputants, there was very little substantial difference between us. Our dispute, if any, was rather verbal than philosophical. On the subject of his experiment, however, Col. Harris fancied, that, in employing some forty or fifty of the Indians, of both sexes, he had brought together a community sufficiently large for the purposes of a fair experiment. Still, I thought that the argument remained untouched. They were not subordinate; they were not subdued; they could still exercise a free and absolute will, in despite of authority and reason. He could resort to no method for compelling their obedience; and we know pretty well what will result —even among white men—from the option of vagrancy.

"But," I urged, "even if the objections which I have stated, fail of defeating your scheme, there is yet another agent of defeat working against it, in the presence of these elderly Indians, who do not join in the labour, and yet, according to your own showing, still prowl in waiting to snatch from the hands of the industrious all the fruits of their toil. The natural effect of this will be to discourage the industry of those who work; for, unless the labourer is permitted to enjoy a fair proportion of the fruits of his labour, it is morally impossible that he should long continue it."

Our conference was interrupted by the appearance of the labourers, Indians and Negroes, who now began to come in, bringing with them the cotton which they had severally gathered during the day. This was accumulated in the court-yard, before the dwelling; each Indian, man or woman, standing beside the bag or bas-

ket which contained the proofs of his industry. You may readily suppose, that, after the dialogue and discussion which is partially reported above, I felt no little interest in observing the proceedings. The parties present were quite numerous. I put the negroes out of the question, though they were still to be seen, lingering in the background, grinning spectators of the scene. The number of Indians, men and women, who had *that day* been engaged in picking, was thirty-nine. Of these, twenty-six were females; three, only, might be accounted men, and ten were boys —none over sixteen. Of the females the number of elderly and young women was nearly equal. Of the men, one was very old and infirm; a second of middle age, who appeared to be something of an idiot; while the third, whom I regarded for this reason with more consideration and interest than all the party beside, was one of the most noble specimens of physical manhood that my eyes had ever beheld. He was fully six feet three inches in height, slender but muscular in the extreme. He possessed a clear, upright, open, generous cast of countenance, as utterly unlike that sullen, suspicious expression of the ordinary Indian face, as you can possibly imagine. Good nature and good sense were the predominant characteristics of his features, and—which is quite as unusual with Indians when in the presence of strangers —he laughed and jested with all the merry, unrestrainable vivacity of a youth of Anglo-Saxon breed. How was it that so noble a specimen of manhood consented to herd with the women and the weak of his tribe, in descending to the mean labours which the warriors were accustomed to despise?

"He must either be a fellow of great sense, or he must be a coward. He is degraded."

Such was my conclusion. The answer of Col. Harris was immediate.

"He is a fellow of good sense, and very far from being a coward. He is one of the best Choctaws that I know."

"A man, then, to be a leader of his people. It is a singular proof of good sense and great mental flexibility, to find an Indian, who is courageous, voluntarily assuming tasks which are held to be degrading among the hunters. I should like to talk with this *fellow* when you are done. What is his name?"

"His proper name is Oakatibbé; but that by which he is generally known among us—his English name—is Slim Sampson, a name which he gets on the score of his superior strength and great slenderness. The latter name, in ordinary use, has completely superseded the former, even among his own people. It may be remarked, by the way, as another proof of the tacit deference of the inferior to the superior people, that most Indians prefer to use the names given by the whites to those of their own language. There are very few among them who will not contrive, after a short intimacy with white men, to get some epithet —which is not always a complimentary one—but which they cling to as tenaciously as they would to some far more valuable possession."

This little dialogue was whispered during the stir which followed the first arrival of the labourers. We had no opportunity for more.

The rest of the Indians were in no respect remarkable. There were some eight or ten women, and perhaps as many men, who did not engage in the toils of their companions, though they did not seem the less interested in the result. These, I noted, were all, in greater or less degree, elderly persons. One was full eighty years old, and a strange fact for one so venerable, was the most confirmed drunkard of the tribe. When the cotton pickers advanced with their baskets, the hangers-on drew nigh also, deeply engrossed with the prospect of reaping the gains from that industry which they had no mood to emulate. These, however, were very moderate, in most cases. Where a negro woman picked from one to two hundred weight of cotton, *per diem*, the Indian woman, at the utmost, gathered sixty-five; and the general average among them, did not much exceed forty-five. Slim Sampson's basket weighed eighty-six pounds—an amount considerably greater than any of the rest—and Col. Harris assured me, that his average during the week had been, at no time, much below this quantity.

The proceedings had gone on without interruption or annoyance for the space of half an hour. Col. Harris had himself weighed every basket, with scrupulous nicety, and recorded the several weights opposite to the name of the picker, in a little memo-

randum book which he kept exclusively for this purpose; and it was amusing to see with what pleasurable curiosity, the Indians, men and women, watched the record which stated their several accounts. The whole labour of the week was to be settled for that night (Saturday), and hence the unusual gathering of those whose only purpose in being present, was to grasp at the spoils.

Among these hawks was one middle-aged Indian—a stern, sulky fellow, of considerable size and strength—whose skin was even then full of liquor, which contributing to the usual insolence of his character, made him at times very troublesome. He had more than once, during the proceedings, interfered between Col. Harris and his *employées*, in such a manner as to provoke, in the mind of that gentleman, no small degree of irritation. The English name of this Indian, was Loblolly Jack. Loblolly Jack had a treble motive for being present and conspicuous. He had among the labourers, a wife and two daughters. When the baskets of these were brought forward to be weighed, he could no longer be kept in the background, but, resolutely thrusting himself before the rest, he handled basket, book and steelyards in turn, uttered his suspicions of foul play, and insisted upon a close examination of every movement which was made by the proprietor. In this manner, he made it very difficult for him to proceed in his duties; and his conduct, to do the Indians justice, seemed quite as annoying to them as to Col. Harris. The wife frequently expostulated with him, in rather bolder language than an Indian squaw is apt to use to her liege lord; while Slim Sampson, after a few words of reproach, expressed in Choctaw, concluded by telling him in plain English, that he was "a rascal dog." He seemed the only one among them who had no fear of the intruder. Loblolly Jack answered in similar terms, and Slim Sampson, clearing the baskets at a single bound, confronted him with a show of fight, and a direct challenge to it, on the spot where they stood. The other seemed no ways loth. He recoiled a pace, drew his knife—a sufficient signal for Slim Sampson to get his own in readiness—and, thus opposed, they stood, glaring upon each other with eyes of the most determined expression of malignity. A moment more—an additional word of provocation from either—and blows must have taken place. But Col. Harris, a

man of great firmness, put himself between them, and calling to one of his negroes, bade him bring out from the house his double-barreled gun.

"Now," said he, "my good fellows, the first man of you that lifts his hand to strike, I'll shoot him down; so look to it. Slim Sampson, go back to your basket, and don't meddle in this business. Don't you suppose that I'm man enough to keep Loblolly Jack in order? You shall see."

It is not difficult for a determined white man to keep an Indian in subordination, so long as both of them are sober. A few words more convinced Loblolly Jack, who had not yet reached the reckless stage in drunkenness, that his wiser course was to give back and keep quiet, which he did. The storm subsided almost as suddenly as it had been raised, and Col. Harris resumed his occupation. Still, the Indian who had proved so troublesome before, continued his annoyances, though in a manner somewhat less audacious. His last proceeding was to get as nigh as he could to the basket which was about to be weighed—his wife's basket—and, with the end of a stick, adroitly introduced into some little hole, he contrived to press the basket downwards, and thus to add so much to the weight of the cotton, that his squaw promised to bear off the palm of victory in that day's picking. Nobody saw the use to which the stick was put, and for a few moments no one suspected it. Had the cunning fellow been more moderate, he might have succeeded in his attempt upon the steelyards; but his pressure increased with every approach which was made to a determination of the weight, and while all were wondering that so small a basket should be so heavy, Slim Sampson discovered and pointed out the trick to Col. Harris, who suddenly snatching the stick from the grasp of the Indian, was about to lay it over his head. But this my expostulation prevented; and, after some delay, the proceedings were finally ended; but in such a manner as to make my friend somewhat more doubtful than he had been before, on the subject of his experiment. He paid off their accounts, some in cloths and calicoes, of which he had provided a small supply for this purpose; but the greater number, under the evil influence of the idle and the elder, demanded and received their pay in money.

CHAPTER III.

It was probably about ten o'clock that evening. We had finished supper, and Col. H. and myself had resumed the subject upon which we had been previously engaged. But the discussion was languid, and both of us were unquestionably lapsing into that state, when each readily receives an apology for retiring for the night, when we were startled from our drowsy tendencies by a wild and terrible cry, such as made me thrill instinctively with the conviction that something terrible had taken place. We started instantly to our feet, and threw open the door. The cry was more distinct and piercing, and its painful character could not be mistaken. It was a cry of death—of sudden terror, and great and angry excitement. Many voices were mingled together—some expressive of fury, some of fear, and many of lamentation. The tones which finally prevailed over, and continued long after all others had subsided, were those of women.

"These sounds come from the shop of that trader. Those rascally Choctaws are drunk and fighting, and ten to one but somebody is killed among them!" was the exclamation of Col. H. "These sounds are familiar to me. I have heard them once before. They signify murder. It is a peculiar whoop which the Indians have, to denote the shedding of blood—to show that a crime has been committed."

The words had scarcely been uttered, before Slim Sampson came suddenly out into the road, and joined us at the door. Col. H. instantly asked him to enter, which he did. When he came fully into the light, we discovered that he had been drinking. His eyes bore sufficient testimony to the fact, though his drunkenness seemed to have subsided into something like stupor. His looks were heavy, rather than calm. He said nothing, but drew nigh to the fireplace, and seated himself upon one corner of the hearth. I now discovered that his hands and hunting shirt were *stained with* blood. His eyes beheld the bloody tokens at the same

time, and he turned his hand curiously over, and examined it by the fire-light.

"Kurnel," said he, in broken English, "me is one dog fool!"

"How, Sampson?"

"Me drunk—me fight—me kill Loblolly Jack! Look ya! Dis blood 'pon my hands. 'Tis Loblolly Jack blood! He dead! I stick him wid de knife!"

"Impossible! What made you do it?"

"Me drunk! Me dog fool!—Drink whiskey at liquor shop—hab money—buy whiskey—drunk come, and Loblolly Jack dead!"

This was the substance of the story, which was confirmed a few moments after, by the appearance of several other Indians, the friends of the two parties. From these it appeared that all of them had been drinking, at the shop of Ligon, the white man; that, when heated with liquor, both Loblolly Jack and Slim Sampson had, as with one accord, resumed the strife which had been arrested by the prompt interference of Col. H.; that, from words they had got to blows, and the former had fallen, fatally hurt, by a single stroke from the other's hand and knife.

The Indian law, like that of the Hebrews, is eye for eye, tooth for tooth, life for life. The fate of Slim Sampson was ordained. He was to die on the morrow. This was well understood by himself as by all the rest. The wound of Loblolly Jack had proved mortal. He was already dead; and it was arranged among the parties that Slim Sampson was to remain that night, if permitted, at the house of Col. H., and to come forth at early sunrise to execution. Col. H. declared his willingness that the criminal should remain in his house; but, at the same time, disclaimed all responsibility in the business; and assured the old chief, whose name was "Rising Smoke," that he would not be answerable for his appearance.

"He won't run," said the other, indifferently.

"But you will not put a watch over him—I will not suffer more than the one to sleep in my house."

The old chief repeated his assurance that Slim Sampson would not seek to fly. No guard was to be placed over him. He was

expected to remain quiet, and come forth to execution at the hour appointed.

"He got for dead," continued Rising Smoke—"he know the law. He will come and dead like a man. Oakatibbé got big heart." Every word which the old fellow uttered went to mine.

What an eulogy was this upon Indian inflexibility! What confidence in the passive obedience of the warrior! After a little farther dialogue, they departed,—friends and enemies—and the unfortunate criminal was left with us alone. He still maintained his seat upon the hearth. His muscles were composed and calm —not rigid. His thoughts, however, were evidently busy; and, once or twice, I could see that his head was moved slowly from side to side, with an expression of mournful self-abandonment. I watched every movement and look with the deepest interest, while Col. H. with a concern necessarily deeper than my own, spoke with him freely, on the subject of his crime. It was, in fact, because of the affair of Col. H. that the unlucky deed was committed. It was true, that, for this, the latter gentleman was in no wise responsible; but that did not lessen, materially, the pain which he felt at having, however unwittingly, occasioned it. He spoke with the Indian in such terms of condolence as conventional usage among us has determined to be the most proper. He proffered to buy off the friends and relatives of the deceased, if the offence could be commuted for money. The poor fellow was very grateful, but, at the same time, told him that the attempt was useless. —The tribe had never been known to permit such a thing, and the friends of Loblolly Jack were too much his enemies, to consent to any commutation of the penalty.

Col. H., however, was unsatisfied, and determined to try the experiment. The notion had only suggested itself to him after the departure of the Indians. He readily conjectured where he should find them, and we immediately set off for the grogshop of Ligon. This was little more than a quarter of a mile from the plantation. When we reached it, we found the Indians, generally, in the worst possible condition to be treated with. They were, most of them, in the last stages of intoxication. The dead body of the murdered man was stretched out in the piazza, or gallery, half covered with a bear-skin. The breast was bare—

a broad, bold, manly bosom—and the wound, a deep narrow gash, around which the blood stood, clotted, in thick, frothy masses. The nearer relations of the deceased, were perhaps the most drunk of the assembly. Their grief necessarily entitled them to the greatest share of consolation, and this took the form of whiskey. Their love of excess, and the means of indulgence, encouraged us with the hope that their vengeance might be bought off without much difficulty, but we soon found ourselves very much deceived. Every effort, every offer, proved fruitless; and after vainly exhausting every art and argument, old Rising Smoke drew us aside to tell us that the thing was impossible.

"Oakatibbé hab for die, and no use for talk. De law is make for Oakatibbé, and Loblolly Jack, and me, Rising Smoke, and all, just the same. Oakatibbé will dead to-morrow."

With sad hearts, we left the maudlin and miserable assembly. When we returned, we found Slim Sampson employed in carving with his knife upon the handle of his tomahawk. In the space thus made, he introduced a small bit of flattened silver, which seemed to have been used for a like purpose on some previous occasion. It was rudely shaped like a bird, and was probably one of those trifling ornaments which usually decorate the stocks of rifle and shot-gun. I looked with increasing concern upon his countenance. What could a spectator—one unacquainted with the circumstances—have met with there? Nothing, surely, of that awful event which had just taken place, and of that doom which now seemed so certainly to await him. He betrayed no sort of interest in our mission. His look and manner denoted his own perfect conviction of its inutility; and when we told him what had taken place, he neither answered nor looked up.

It would be difficult to describe my feelings and those of my companion. The more we reflected upon the affair, the more painful and oppressive did our thoughts become. A pain, little short of horror, coupled itself with every emotion. We left the Indian still beside the fire. He had begun a low chanting song just before we retired, in his own language, which was meant as a narrative of the chief events of his life. The death song—for such it was—is neither more nor less than a recital of those deeds which it will be creditable to a son or a relative to remember.

In this way the valor of their great men, and the leading events in their history, are transmitted through successive ages. He was evidently refreshing his own memory in preparation for the morrow. He was arranging the narrative of the past, in proper form for the acceptance of the future.

We did not choose to disturb him in this vocation, and retired. When we had got to our chamber, H. who already had one boot off, exclaimed suddenly—"Look you, S., this fellow ought not to perish in this manner. We should make an effort to save him. We must save him!"

"What will you do?"

"Come—let us go back and try and urge him to flight. He can escape easily while all these fellows are drunk. He shall have my best horse for the purpose."

We returned to the apartment.

"Slim Sampson."

"Kurnel!" was the calm reply.

"There's no sense in your staying here to be shot."

"Ugh!" was the only answer, but in an assenting tone.

"You're not a bad fellow—you didn't mean to kill Loblolly Jack—it's very hard that you should die for what you didn't wish to do. You're too young to die. You've got a great many years to live. You ought to live to be an old man and have sons like yourself; and there's a great deal of happiness in this world, if a man only knows where to look for it. But a man that's dead is of no use to himself, or to his friends, or his enemies. Why should you die—why should you be shot?"

"Eh?"

"Hear me; your people are all drunk at Ligon's—blind drunk—deaf drunk—they can neither see nor hear. They won't get sober till morning—perhaps not then. You've been across the Mississippi, hav'nt you? You know the way?"

The reply was affirmative.

"Many Choctaws live over the Mississippi now—on the Red River, and far beyond, to the Red Hills. Go to them—they will take you by the hand—they will give you one of their daughters to wife—they will love you—they will make you a chief. Fly, Sampson, fly to them—you shall have one of my horses, and be-

fore daylight you will be down the country, among the white people, and far from your enemies—Go, my good fellow, it would be a great pity that so brave a man should die."

This was the substance of my friend's exhortation. It was put into every shape, and addressed to every fear, hope, or passion which might possibly have influence over the human bosom. A strong conflict took place in the mind of the Indian, the outward signs of which were not wholly suppressible. He started to his feet, trod the floor hurriedly, and there was a tremulous quickness in the movement of his eyes, and a dilation of their orbs, which amply denoted the extent of his emotion. He turned suddenly upon us, when H. had finished speaking, and replied in language very nearly like the following.

"I love the whites—I was always a friend to the whites. I believe I love their laws better than my own. Loblolly Jack laughed at me because I loved the whites, and wanted our people to live like them. But I am of no use now. I can love them no more. My people say that I must die. How can I live?"

Such was the purport of his answer. The meaning of it was simple. He was not unwilling to avail himself of the suggestions of my friend—to fly—to live—but he could not divest himself of that habitual deference to those laws to which he had given implicit reverence from the beginning. Custom is the superior tyrant of all savage nations.

To embolden him on this subject, was now the joint object of Col. H. and myself. We spared no argument to convince him that he ought to fly. It was something in favour of our object, that the Indian regards the white man as so infinitely his superior; and, in the case of Slim Sampson, we were assisted by his own inclinations in favour of those customs of the whites, which he had already in part begun to adopt. We discussed for his benefit that which may be considered one of the leading elements in civilization—the duty of saving and keeping life as long as we can—insisted upon the morality of flying from any punishment which would deprive us of it; and at length had the satisfaction of seeing him convinced. He yielded to our arguments and solicitations, accepted the horse, which he promised voluntarily to find some early means to return, and, with a sigh—perhaps one of the

first proofs of that change of feeling and of principle which he had just shown, he declared his intention to take the road instantly.

"Go to bed, Kurnel. Your horse will come back." We retired, and a few moments after heard him leave the house. I am sure that both of us felt a degree of light-heartedness which scarcely any other event could have produced. We could not sleep, however. For myself I answer—it was almost dawn before I fell into an uncertain slumber, filled with visions of scuffling Indians—the stark corse of Loblolly Jack, being the conspicuous object, and Slim Sampson standing up for execution.

CHAPTER IV.

Neither Col. H. nor myself arose at a very early hour. Our first thoughts and feelings at waking were those of exultation. We rejoiced that we had been instrumental in saving from an ignominious death, a fellow creature, and one who seemed so worthy, in so many respects. Our exultation was not a little increased, as we reflected on the disappointment of his enemies; and we enjoyed a hearty laugh together, as we talked over the matter while putting on our clothes. When we looked from the window the area in front of the house was covered with Indians. They sat, or stood, or walked, all around the dwelling. The hour appointed for the delivery of Slim Sampson had passed, yet they betrayed no emotion. We fancied, however, that we could discern in the countenances of most among them, the sentiment of friendship or hostility for the criminal, by which they were severally governed. A dark, fiery look of exultation—a grim anticipation of delight—was evident in the faces of his enemies; while, among his friends, men and women, a subdued concern and humbling sadness, were the prevailing traits of expression.

But when we went below to meet them—when it became known that the murderer had fled, taking with him the best horse of the proprietor, the outbreak was tremendous. A terrible yell went up from the party devoted to Loblolly Jack; while the friends and relatives of Slim Sampson at once sprang to their weapons, and put themselves in an attitude of defence. We had not foreseen the effects of our interposition and advice. We did not know, or recollect, that the nearest connection of the criminal, among the Indian tribes, in the event of his escape, would be required to suffer in his place; and this, by the way, is the grand source of that security which they felt the night before, that flight would not be attempted by the destined victim. The aspect of affairs looked squally. Already was the bow bent and the tomahawk lifted. Already had the parties separated, each going to

his own side, and ranging himself in front of some one opponent. The women sunk rapidly into the rear, and provided themselves with billets or fence-rails, as they occurred to their hands; while little brats of boys, ten and twelve years old, kept up a continual shrill clamour, brandishing aloft their tiny bows and *blow-guns*, which were only powerful against the lapwing and the sparrow. In political phrase, "a great crisis was at hand." The stealthier chiefs and leaders of both sides, had sunk from sight, behind the trees or houses, in order to avail themselves of all the arts of Indian strategy. Every thing promised a sudden and stern conflict. At the first show of commotion, Col. H. had armed himself. I had been well provided with pistols and bowie knife, before leaving home; and, apprehending the worst, we yet took our places as peace-makers, between the contending parties.

It is highly probable that all our interposition would have been fruitless to prevent their collision; and, though our position certainly delayed the progress of the quarrel, yet all we could have hoped to effect by our interference would have been the removal of the combatants to a more remote battle ground. But a circumstance that surprised and disappointed us all, took place, to settle the strife forever, and to reconcile the parties without any resort to blows. While the turmoil was at the highest, and we had despaired of doing any thing to prevent bloodshed, the tramp of a fast galloping horse was heard in the woods, and the next moment the steed of Col. H. made his appearance, covered with foam, Slim Sampson on his back, and still driven by the lash of his rider at the top of his speed. He leaped the enclosure, and was drawn up still quivering in every limb, in the area between the opposing Indians. The countenance of the noble fellow told his story. His heart had smitten him by continual reproaches, at the adoption of a conduct unknown in his nation; and which all its hereditary opinions had made cowardly and infamous. Besides, he remembered the penalties which, in consequence of his flight, must fall heavily upon his people. Life was sweet to him—very sweet! He had the promise of many bright years before him. His mind was full of honourable and—speaking in comparative phrase—lofty purposes, for the improvement of himself and nation. We *have* already sought to show that, by his conduct, he had taken

one large step in resistance to the tyrannous usages of custom, in order to introduce the elements of civilization among his people. But he could not withstand the reproaches of a conscience formed upon principles which his own genius was not equal to overthrow. His thoughts, during his flight, must have been of a very humbling character; but his features now denoted only pride, exultation and a spirit strengthened by resignation against the worst. By his flight and subsequent return, he had, in fact, exhibited a more lively spectacle of moral firmness, than would have been displayed by his simple submission in remaining. He seemed to feel this. It looked out from his soul in every movement of his body. He leaped from his horse, exclaiming, while he slapped his breast with his open palm:

"Oakatibbé heard the voice of a chief, that said he must die. Let the chief look here—Oakatibbé is come!"

A shout went up from both parties. The signs of strife disappeared. The language of the crowd was no longer that of threatening and violence. It was understood that there would be no resistance in behalf of the condemned. Col. H. and myself, were both mortified and disappointed. Though the return of Slim Sampson, had obviously prevented a combat *à outrance*, in which a dozen or more might have been slain, still we could not but regret the event. The life of such a fellow seemed to both of us, to be worth the lives of any hundred of his people.

Never did man carry with himself more simple nobleness. He was at once surrounded by his friends and relatives. The hostile party, from whom the executioners were to be drawn, stood looking on at some little distance, the very pictures of patience. There was no sort of disposition manifested among them, to hurry the proceedings. Though exulting in the prospect of soon shedding the blood of one whom they esteemed an enemy, yet all was dignified composure and forbearance. The signs of exultation were no where to be seen. Meanwhile, a conversation was carried on in low, soft accents, unmarked by physical action of any kind, between the condemned and two other Indians. One of these was the unhappy mother of the criminal—the other was his uncle. They rather listened to his remarks, than made any of their own. The dialogue was conducted in their own language. After a

while this ceased, and he made a signal which seemed to be felt, rather than understood, by all the Indians, friends and enemies. All of them started into instant intelligence. It was a sign that he was ready for the final proceedings. He rose to his feet and they surrounded him. The groans of the old woman, his mother, were now distinctly audible, and she was led away by the uncle, who, placing her among the other women, returned to the condemned, beside whom he now took his place. Col. H. and myself, also drew nigh. Seeing us, Oakatibbé simply said, with a smile:

"Ah, kurnel, you see, Injun man ain't strong like white man!"

Col. H. answered with emotion.

"I would have saved you, Sampson."

"Oakatibbé hab for dead!" said the worthy fellow, with another, but a very wretched smile.

His firmness was unabated. A procession was formed, which was headed by three sturdy fellows, carrying their rifles conspicuously upon their shoulders. These were the appointed executioners, and were all near relatives of the man who had been slain. There was no mercy in their looks. Oakatibbé followed immediately after these. He seemed pleased that we should accompany him to the place of execution. Our way lay through a long avenue of stunted pines, which conducted us to a spot where an elevated ridge on either hand produced a broad and very prettily defined valley. My eyes, in all this progress, were scarcely ever drawn off from the person of him who was to be the principal actor in the approaching scene. Never, on any occasion, did I behold a man with a step more firm—a head so unbent—a countenance so sweetly calm, though grave—and of such quiet unconcern, at the obvious fate in view. Yet there was nothing in his deportment of that effort which would be the case with most white men on a similar occasion, who seek to wear the aspect of heroism. He walked as to a victory, but he walked with a staid, even dignity, calmly, and without the flush of any excitement on his cheek. In his eye there was none of that feverish curiosity, which seeks for the presence of his executioner, and cannot be averted from the contemplation of the mournful paraphernalia of death. His look was like that of the strong man, conscious of his inevitable

doom, and prepared, as it is inevitable, to meet it with corresponding indifference.

The grave was now before us. It must have been prepared at the first dawn of the morning. The executioners paused, when they had reached a spot within thirty steps of it. But the condemned passed on, and stopped only on the edge of its open jaws. The last trial was at hand with all its terrors. The curtain was about to drop, and the scene of life, with all its hopes and promises and golden joys—even to an Indian golden—was to be shut forever. I felt a painful and numbing chill pass through my frame, but I could behold no sign of change in him. He now beckoned his friends around him. His enemies drew nigh also, but in a remoter circle. He was about to commence his song of death—the narrative of his performances, his purposes, all his living experience. He began a low chant, slow, measured and composed, the words seeming to consist of monosyllables only. As he proceeded, his eyes kindled, and his arms were extended. His action became impassioned, his utterance more rapid, and the tones were distinguished by increasing warmth. I could not understand a single word which he uttered, but the cadences were true and full of significance. The rise and fall of his voice, truly proportioned to the links of sound by which they were connected, would have yielded a fine lesson to the European teacher of school eloquence. His action was as graceful as that of a mighty tree yielding to and gradually rising from the pressure of a sudden gust. I felt the eloquence which I could not understand. I fancied, from his tones and gestures, the play of the muscles of his mouth, and the dilation of his eyes, that I could detect the instances of daring valour, or good conduct, which his narrative comprised. One portion of it, as he approached the close, I certainly could not fail to comprehend. He evidently spoke of his last unhappy affray with the man whom he had slain. His head was bowed—the light passed from his eyes, his hands were folded upon his heart, and his voice grew thick and husky. Then came the narrative of his flight. His glance was turned upon Col. H. and myself, and, at the close, he extended his hand to us both. We grasped it earnestly, and with a degree of emotion which I would not now seek to describe. He paused.

The catastrophe was at hand. I saw him step back, so as to place himself at the very verge of the grave—he then threw open his breast—a broad, manly, muscular bosom, that would have sufficed for a Hercules—one hand he struck upon the spot above the heart, where it remained—the other was raised above his head. This was the signal. I turned away with a strange sickness. I could look no longer. In the next instant I heard the simultaneous report, as one, of the three rifles, and when I again looked, they were shoveling in the fresh mould, upon the noble form of one, who, under other more favouring circumstances, might have been a father to his nation.

JOCASSÉE.

A CHEROKEE LEGEND.

CHAPTER I.

"KEOWEE Old Fort," as the people in that quarter style it, is a fine antique ruin and relic of the revolution, in the district of Pendleton, South Carolina. The region of country in which we find it is, of itself, highly picturesque and interesting. The broad river of Keowee, which runs through it, though comparatively small as a stream in America, would put to shame, by its size not less than its beauty, one half of the far-famed and boasted rivers of Europe;—and then the mountains, through and among which it winds its way, embody more of beautiful situation and romantic prospect, than art can well figure to the eye, or language convey to the imagination. To understand, you must see it. Words are of little avail when the ideas overcrowd utterance; and even vanity itself is content to be dumb in the awe inspired by a thousand prospects, like Niagara, the ideals of a god, and altogether beyond the standards common to humanity.

It is not long since I wandered through this interesting region, under the guidance of my friend, Col. G——, who does the honours of society, in that quarter, with a degree of ease and unostentatious simplicity, which readily makes the visiter at home. My friend was one of those citizens to whom one's own country is always of paramount interest, and whose mind and memory, accordingly, have been always most happily employed when storing away and digesting into pleasing narrative those thousand little traditions of the local genius, which give life to rocks and valleys, and people earth with the beautiful colours and creatures

of the imagination. These, for the gratification of the spiritual seeker, he had forever in readiness; and, with him to illustrate them, it is not surprising if the grove had a moral existence in my thoughts, and all the waters around breathed and were instinct with poetry. To all his narratives I listened with a satisfaction which book-stories do not often afford me. The more he told, the more he had to tell; for nothing staled

"His infinite variety."

There may have been something in the style of telling his stories; there was much, certainly, that was highly attractive in his manner of doing every thing, and this may have contributed not a little to the success of his narratives. Perhaps, too, my presence, upon the very scene of each legend, may have given them a life and a *vraisemblance* they had wanted otherwise.

In this manner, rambling about from spot to spot, I passed five weeks, without being, at any moment, conscious of time's progress. Day after day, we wandered forth in some new direction, contriving always to secure, and without effort, that pleasurable excitement of novelty, for which the great city labours in vain, spite of her varying fashions, and crowding, and not always innocent indulgences. From forest to river, from hill to valley, still on horseback,—for the mountainous character of the country forbade any more luxurious form of travel,—we kept on our way, always changing our ground with the night, and our prospect with the morning. In this manner we travelled over or round the Six Mile, and the Glassy, and a dozen other mountains; and sometimes, with a yet greater scope of adventure, pushed off on a much longer ramble,—such as took us to the falls of the White Water, and gave us a glimpse of the beautiful river of Jocassée, named sweetly after the Cherokee maiden, who threw herself into its bosom on beholding the scalp of her lover dangling from the neck of his conqueror. The story is almost a parallel to that of the sister of Horatius, with this difference, that the Cherokee girl did not wait for the vengeance of her brother, and altogether spared her reproaches. I tell the story, which is pleasant and curious, in the language of my friend, from whom I first heard it.

"The Occonies and the Little Estatoees, or, rather, the Brown

Vipers and the Green Birds, were both minor tribes of the Cherokee nation, between whom, as was not unfrequently the case, there sprung up a deadly enmity. The Estatoees had their town on each side of the two creeks, which, to this day, keep their name, and on the eastern side of the Keowee river. The Occonies occupied a much larger extent of territory, but it lay on the opposite, or west side of the same stream. Their differences were supposed to have arisen from the defeat of Chatuga, a favourite leader of the Occonies, who aimed to be made a chief of the nation at large. The Estatoee warrior, Toxaway, was successful; and as the influence of Chatuga was considerable with his tribe, he laboured successfully to engender in their bosoms a bitter dislike of the Estatoees. This feeling was made to exhibit itself on every possible occasion. The Occonies had no word too foul by which to describe the Estatoees. They likened them, in familiar speech, to every thing which, in the Indian imagination, is accounted low and contemptible. In reference to war, they were reputed women,—in all other respects, they were compared to dogs and vermin; and, with something of a Christian taste and temper, they did not scruple, now and then, to invoke the devil of their more barbarous creed, for the eternal disquiet of their successful neighbours, the Little Estatoees, and their great chief, Toxaway.

"In this condition of things there could not be much harmony; and, accordingly, as if by mutual consent, there was but little intercourse between the two people. When they met, it was either to regard one another with a cold, repulsive distance, or else, as enemies, actively to foment quarrel and engage in strife. But seldom, save on national concerns, did the Estatoees cross the Keowee to the side held by the Occonies; and the latter, more numerous, and therefore less reluctant for strife than their rivals, were yet not often found on the opposite bank of the same river. Sometimes, however, small parties of hunters from both tribes, rambling in one direction or another, would pass into the enemy's territory; but this was not frequent, and when they met, quarrel and bloodshed were sure to mark the adventure.

"But there was one young warrior of the Estatoees, who did not give much heed to this condition of parties, and who, moved

by an errant spirit, and wholly insensible to fear, would not hesitate, when the humour seized him, to cross the river, making quite as free, when he did so, with the hunting-grounds of the Occonies as they did themselves. This sort of conduct did not please the latter very greatly, but Nagoochie was always so gentle, and at the same time so brave, that the young warriors of Occony either liked or feared him too much to throw themselves often in his path, or labour, at any time, to arrest his progress.

"In one of these excursions, Nagoochie made the acquaintance of Jocassée, one of the sweetest of the dusky daughters of Occony. He was rambling, with bow and quiver, in pursuit of game, as was his custom, along that beautiful enclosure which the whites have named after her, the Jocassée valley. The circumstances under which they met were all strange and exciting, and well calculated to give her a power over the young hunter, to which the pride of the Indian does not often suffer him to submit. It was towards evening when Nagoochie sprung a fine buck from a hollow of the wood beside him, and just before you reach the ridge of rocks which hem in and form this beautiful valley. With the first glimpse of his prey flew the keen shaft of Nagoochie; but, strange to say, though renowned as a hunter, not less than as a warrior, the arrow failed entirely and flew wide of the victim. Off he bounded headlong after the fortunate buck; but though, every now and then getting him within range, —for the buck took the pursuit coolly,—the hunter still most unaccountably failed to strike him. Shaft after shaft had fallen seemingly hurtless from his sides; and though, at frequent intervals, suffered to approach so nigh to the animal that he could not but hope still for better fortune, to his great surprise, the wary buck would dash off when he least expected it, bounding away in some new direction, with as much life and vigour as ever. What to think of this, the hunter knew not; but such repeated disappointments at length impressed it strongly upon his mind, that the object he pursued was neither more nor less than an Occony wizard, seeking to entrap him; so, with a due feeling of superstition, and a small touch of sectional venom aroused into action within his heart, Nagoochie, after the manner of his people, promised a green bird—the emblem of his tribe—in sacrifice to

the tutelar divinity of Estato, if he could only be permitted to overcome the potent enchanter, who had thus dazzled his aim and blunted his arrows. He had hardly uttered this vow, when he beheld the insolent deer mincingly grazing upon a beautiful tuft of long grass in the valley, just below the ledge of rock upon which he stood. Without more ado, he pressed onward to bring him within fair range of his arrows, little doubting at the moment that the Good Spirit had heard his prayer, and had granted his desire. But, in his hurry, leaping too hastily forward, and with eyes fixed only upon his proposed victim, his foot was caught by the smallest stump in the world, and the very next moment found him precipitated directly over the rock and into the valley, within a few paces of the deer, who made off with the utmost composure, gazing back, as he did so, in the eyes of the wounded hunter, for all the world, as if he enjoyed the sport mightily. Nagoochie, as he saw this, gravely concluded that he had fallen a victim to the wiles of the Occony wizard, and looked confidently to see half a score of Occonies upon him, taking him at a vantage. Like a brave warrior, however, he did not despond, but determining to gather up his loins for battle and the torture, he sought to rise and put himself in a state of preparation. What, however, was his horror, to find himself utterly unable to move; —his leg had been broken in the fall, and he was covered with bruises from head to foot.

"Nagoochie gave himself up for lost; but he had scarcely done so, when he heard a voice,—the sweetest, he thought, he had ever heard in his life,—singing a wild, pleasant song, such as the Occonies love, which, ingeniously enough, summed up the sundry reasons why the mouth, and not the eyes, had been endowed with the faculty of eating. These reasons were many, but the last is quite enough for us. According to the song, had the eyes, and not the mouth, been employed for this purpose, there would soon be a famine in the land, for of all gluttons, the eyes are the greatest. Nagoochie groaned aloud as he heard the song, the latter portion of which completely indicated the cause of his present misfortune. It was, indeed, the gluttony of the eyes which had broken his leg. This sort of allegory the Indians are fond of, and Jocassée knew all their legends. Certainly, thought

Nagoochie, though his leg pained him wofully at the time, 'certainly I never heard such sweet music, and such a voice.' The singer advanced as she sung, and almost stumbled over him.

"'Who are you?' she asked timidly, neither retreating nor advancing; and, as the wounded man looked into her face, he blessed the Occony wizard, by whose management he deemed his leg to have been broken.

"'Look!' was the reply of the young warrior, throwing aside the bearskin which covered his bosom,—'look, girl of Occony! 'tis the *totem* of a chief;' and the green bird stamped upon his left breast, as the badge of his tribe, showed him a warrior of Estato, and something of an enemy. But his eyes had no enmity, and then the broken leg! Jocassée was a gentle maiden, and her heart melted with the condition of the warrior. She made him a sweet promise, in very pretty language, and with the very same voice the music of which was so delicious; and then, with the fleetness of a young doe, she went off to bring him succour.

CHAPTER II.

"NIGHT, in the meanwhile, came on; and the long howl of the wolf, as he looked down from the crag, and waited for the thick darkness in which to descend the valley, came freezingly to the ear of Nagoochie. 'Surely,' he said to himself, 'the girl of Occony will come back. She has too sweet a voice not to keep her word. She will certainly come back.' While he doubted, he believed. Indeed, though still a very young maiden, the eyes of Jocassée had in them a great deal that was good for little beside, than to persuade and force conviction; and the belief in them was pretty extensive in the circle of her rustic acquaintance. All people love to believe in fine eyes, and nothing is more natural than for lovers to swear by them. Nagoochie did not swear by those of Jocassée, but he did most religiously believe in them; and though the night gathered fast, and the long howl of the wolf came close from his crag, down into the valley, the young hunter of the green bird did not despair of the return of the maiden.

"She did return, and the warrior was insensible. But the motion stirred him; the lights gleamed upon him from many torches; he opened his eyes, and when they rested upon Jocassée, they forgot to close again. She had brought aid enough, for her voice was powerful as well as musical; and, taking due care that the totem of the green bird should be carefully concealed by the bearskin, with which her own hands covered his bosom, she had him lifted upon a litter, constructed of several young saplings, which, interlaced with withes, binding it closely together, and strewn thickly with leaves, made a couch as soft as the wounded man could desire. In a few hours, and the form of Nagoochie rested beneath the roof of Attakulla, the sire of Jocassée. She sat beside the young hunter, and it was her hand that placed the fever balm upon his lips, and poured into his

wounds and bruises the strong and efficacious balsams of Indian pharmacy.

"Never was nurse more careful of her charge. Day and night she watched by him, and few were the hours which she then required for her own pleasure or repose. Yet why was Jocassée so devoted to the stranger? She never asked herself so unnecessary a question; but as she was never so well satisfied, seemingly, as when near him, the probability is she found pleasure in her tendance. It was fortunate for him and for her, that her father was not rancorous towards the people of the Green Bird, like the rest of the Occonies. It might have fared hard with Nagoochie otherwise. But Attakulla was a wise old man, and a good; and when they brought the wounded stranger to his lodge, he freely yielded him shelter, and went forth himself to Chinabee, the wise medicine of the Occonies. The eyes of Nagoochie were turned upon the old chief, and when he heard his name, and began to consider where he was, he was unwilling to task the hospitality of one who might be disposed to regard him, when known, in an unfavourable or hostile light. Throwing aside, therefore, the habit of circumspection, which usually distinguishes the Indian warrior, he uncovered his bosom, and bade the old man look upon the totem of his people, precisely as he had done when his eye first met that of Jocassée.

"'Thy name? What do the people of the Green Bird call the young hunter?' asked Attakulla.

"'They name Nagoochie among the braves of the Estato: they will call him a chief of the Cherokee, like Toxaway,' was the proud reply.

"This reference was to a sore subject with the Occonies, and perhaps it was quite as imprudent as it certainly was in improper taste for him to make it. But, knowing where he was, excited by fever, and having—to say much in little—but an unfavourable opinion of Occony magnanimity, he was more rash than reasonable. At that moment, too, Jocassée had made her appearance, and the spirit of the young warrior, desiring to look big in her eyes, had prompted him to a fierce speech not altogether necessary. He knew not the generous nature of Attakulla; and when the old man took him by the hand, spoke well of the Green Bird,

and called him his 'son,' the pride of Nagoochie was something humbled, while his heart grew gentler than ever. His 'son!'—that was the pleasant part; and as the thoughts grew more and more active in his fevered brain, he looked to Jocassée with such a passionate admiration that she sunk back with a happy smile from the flame-glance which he set upon her. And, day after day she tended him until the fever passed off, and the broken limb was set and had reknitted, and the bruises were all healed upon him. Yet he lingered. He did not think himself quite well, and she always agreed with him in opinion. Once and again did he set off, determined not to return, but his limb pained him, and he felt the fever come back whenever he thought of Jocassée; and so the evening found him again at the lodge, while the fever-balm, carefully bruised in milk, was in as great demand as ever for the invalid. But the spirit of the warrior at length grew ashamed of these weaknesses; and, with a desperate effort, for which he gave himself no little credit, he completed his determination to depart with the coming of the new moon. But even this decision was only effected by compromise. Love settled the affair with conscience, after his own fashion; and, under his direction, following the dusky maiden into the little grove that stood beside the cottage, Nagoochie claimed her to fill the lodge of a young warrior of the Green Bird. She broke the wand which he presented her, and seizing upon the torch which she carried, he buried it in the bosom of a neighbouring brook; and thus, after their simple forest ceremonial, Jocassée became the betrothed of Nagoochie.

CHAPTER III.

"But we must keep this secret to ourselves, for as yet it remained unknown to Attakulla, and the time could not come for its revealment until the young warrior had gone home to his people. Jocassée was not so sure that all parties would be so ready as herself to sanction her proceeding. Of her father's willingness, she had no question, for she knew his good nature and good sense; but she had a brother of whom she had many fears and misgivings. He was away, on a great hunt of the young men, up at Charashilactay, or the falls of the White Water, as we call it to this day—a beautiful cascade of nearly forty feet, the water of which is of a milky complexion. How she longed, yet how she dreaded, to see that brother! He was a fierce, impetuous, sanguinary youth, who, to these characteristics, added another still more distasteful to Jocassée;—there was not a man among all the Occonies who so hated the people of the Green Bird as Cheochee. What hopes, or rather what fears, were in the bosom of that maiden!

"But he came not. Day after day they looked for his return, and yet he came not; but in his place a runner, with a bearded stick, a stick covered with slips of skin, torn from the body of a wolf. The runner passed by the lodge of Attakulla, and all its inmates were aroused by the intelligence he brought. A wolf-hunt was commanded by Moitoy, the great war-chief or generalissimo of the Cherokee nation, to take place, instantly, at Charashilactay, where an immense body of wolves had herded together, and had become troublesome neighbours. Old and young, who had either taste for the adventure, or curiosity to behold it, at once set off upon the summons; and Attakulla, old as he was, and Nagoochie, whose own great prowess in hunting had made it a passion, determined readily upon the journey. Jocassée, too, joined the company,—for the maidens of Cherokee were bold *spirits, as* well as beautiful, and loved to ramble, particularly

when, as in the present instance, they went forth in company with their lovers. Lodge after lodge, as they pursued their way, poured forth its inmates, who joined them in their progress, until the company had swollen into a goodly caravan, full of life, anxious for sport, and carrying, as is the fashion among the Indians, provisions of smoked venison and parched grain, in plenty, for many days.

"They came at length to the swelling hills, the long narrow valleys of the Keochee and its tribute river of Toxaway, named after that great chief of the Little Estatoees, of whom we have already heard something. At one and the same moment they beheld the white waters of Charashilactay, plunging over the precipice, and the hundred lodges of the Cherokee hunters. There they had gathered—the warriors and their women—twenty different tribes of the same great nation being represented on the ground; each tribe having its own cluster of cabins, and rising up, in the midst of each, the long pole on which hung the peculiar emblem of the clan. It was not long before Nagoochie marshalled himself along with his brother Estatoees—who had counted him lost—under the beautiful green bird of his tribe, which waved about in the wind, over the heads of their small community.

"The number of warriors representing the Estato in that great hunt was inconsiderable—but fourteen—and the accession, therefore, of so promising a brave as Nagoochie, was no small matter. They shouted with joy at his coming, and danced gladly in the ring between the lodges—the young women in proper taste, and with due spirit, hailing, with a sweet song, the return of so handsome a youth, and one who was yet unmarried.

"Over against the lodges of the Estatoees, lay the more imposing encampment of the rival Occonies, who turned out strongly, as it happened, on this occasion. They were more numerous than any other of the assembled tribes, as the hunt was to take place on a portion of their own territory. Conscious of their superiority, they had not, you may be sure, forborne any of the thousand sneers and sarcasms which they were never at a loss to find when they spoke of the Green Bird warriors; and of all their clan, none was so bitter, so uncompromising, generally, in look,

speech, and action, as Cheochee, the fierce brother of the beautiful Jocassée. Scorn was in his eye, and sarcasm on his lips, when he heard the rejoicings made by the Estatoees on the return of the long-lost hunter.

"'Now wherefore screams the painted bird to-day? why makes he a loud cry in the ears of the brown viper that can strike?' he exclaimed contemptuously yet fiercely.

"It was Jocassée that spoke in reply to her brother, with the quickness of woman's feeling, which they wrong greatly who hold it subservient to the strength of woman's cunning. In her reply, Cheochee saw the weakness of her heart.

"'They scream for Nagoochie,' said the girl; 'it is joy that the young hunter comes back that makes the green bird to sing to-day.'

"'Has Jocassée taken a tongue from the green bird, that she screams in the ears of the brown viper? What has the girl to do with the thoughts of the warrior? Let her go—go, bring drink to Cheochee.'

"Abashed and silent, she did as he commanded, and brought meekly to the fierce brother, a gourd filled with the bitter beverage which the Cherokees love. She had nothing further to say on the subject of the Green Bird warrior, for whom she had already so unwarily spoken. But her words had not fallen unregarded upon the ears of Cheochee, nor had the look of the fond heart which spoke out in her glance, passed unseen by the keen eye of that jealous brother. He had long before this heard of the great fame of Nagoochie as a hunter, and in his ire he was bent to surpass him. Envy had grown into hate, when he heard that this great reputation was that of one of the accursed Estatoees; and, not satisfied with the desire to emulate, he also aimed to destroy. This feeling worked like so much gall in his bosom; and when his eyes looked upon the fine form of Nagoochie, and beheld its symmetry, grace, and manhood, his desire grew into a furious passion which made him sleepless. The old chief, Attakulla, his father, told him all the story of Nagoochie's accident—how Jocassée had found him; and how, in his own lodge, he had been nursed and tended. The old man spoke approvingly of Nagoochie; and, the better to bring about a good feeling for her lover,

Jocassée humbled herself greatly to her brother,—anticipated his desires, and studiously sought to serve him. But all this failed to effect a favourable emotion in the breast of the malignant young savage towards the young hunter of the Green Bird. He said nothing, however, of his feelings; but they looked out and were alive to the sight, in every aspect, whenever any reference, however small, was made to the subject of his ire. The Indian passion is subtlety, and Cheochee was a warrior already famous among the old chiefs of Cherokee.

CHAPTER IV.

"THE next day came the commencement of the great hunt, and the warriors were up betimes and active. Stations were chosen, the keepers of which, converging to a centre, were to hem in the wild animal on whose tracks they were going. The wolves were known to be in a hollow of the hills, near Charashilactay, which had but one outlet; and points of close approximation across this outlet were the stations of honour; for, goaded by the hunters to this passage, and failing of egress in any other, the wolf, it was well known, would be then dangerous in the extreme. Well calculated to provoke into greater activity the jealousies between the Occonies and the Green Birds, was the assignment made by Moitoy, the chief, of the more dangerous of these stations to these two clans. They now stood alongside of one another, and the action of the two promised to be joint and corresponsive. Such an appointment, in the close encounter with the wolf, necessarily promised to bring the two parties into immediate contact; and such was the event. As the day advanced, and the hunters, contracting their circles, brought the different bands of wolves into one, and pressed upon them to the more obvious and indeed the only outlet, the badges of the Green Bird and the Brown Viper—the one consisting of the stuffed skin and plumage of the Carolina parrot, and the other the attenuated viper, filled out with moss, and winding, with erect head, around the pole, to the top of which it was stuck—were, at one moment, in the indiscriminate hunt, almost mingled over the heads of the two parties. Such a sight was pleasant to neither, and would, at another time, of a certainty, have brought about a squabble. As it was, the Occonies drove their badge-carrier from one to the other end of their ranks, thus studiously avoiding the chance of another collision between the viper so adored, and the green bird so detested. The pride of the Estatoees was exceedingly aroused at this exhibition of impertinence, *and though* a quiet people enough, they began to think that for-

bearance had been misplaced in their relations with their presuming and hostile neighbours. Had it not been for Nagoochie, who had his own reasons for suffering yet more, the Green Birds would certainly have plucked out the eyes of the Brown Vipers, or tried very hard to do it; but the exhortations to peace of the young warrior, and the near neighbourhood of the wolf, quelled any open show of the violence they meditated; but, Indian-like, they determined to wait for the moment of greatest quiet, as that most fitted for taking away a few scalps from the Occony. With a muttered curse, and a contemptuous slap of the hand upon their thighs, the more furious among the Estatoees satisfied their present anger, and then addressed themselves more directly to the business before them.

"The wolves, goaded to desperation by the sight and sound of hunters strewn all over the hills around them, were now, snapping and snarling, and with eyes that flashed with a terrible anger, descending the narrow gully towards the outlet held by the two rival tribes. United action was therefore demanded of those who, for a long time past, had been conscious of no feeling or movement in common. But here they had no choice—no time, indeed, to think. The fierce wolves were upon them, doubly furious at finding the only passage stuck full of enemies. Well and manfully did the hunters stand and seek the encounter with the infuriated beasts. The knife and the hatchet, that day, in the hand of Occony and Estato, did fearful execution. The Brown Vipers fought nobly, and with their ancient reputation. But the Green Birds were the hunters, after all; and they were now stimulated into double adventure and effort, by an honourable ambition to make up for all deficiencies of number by extra valour, and the careful exercise of all that skill in the arts of hunting for which they have always been the most renowned of the tribes of Cherokee. As, one by one, a fearful train, the wolves wound into sight along this or that crag of the gully, arrow after arrow told fearfully upon them, for there were no marksmen like the Estatoees. Nor did they stop at this weapon. The young Nagoochie, more than ever prompted to such audacity, led the way; and dashing into the very path of the teeth-gnashing and claw-rending enemy, he grappled in desperate fight the first that offer-

of the Bear tribe found himself alongside a handful of the Foxes, and a chief of the Alligators plunged promiscuously into the centre of a cluster of the Turkey tribe, whose own chief was probably doing the proper courtesies among the Alligators. These little crossings, however, were amusing rather than annoying, and were, generally, productive of little inconvenience and no strife. But it so happened that there was one exception to the accustomed harmony. The Occonies and Estatoees, like the rest, had broken up in small parties, and, as might have been foreseen, when they came individually to where the crag divided the valley into two, some took the one and some the other hand, and it was not until one of the paths they had taken opened into a little plain in which the woods were bald—a sort of prairie—that a party of seven Occonies discovered that they had among them two of their detested rivals, the Little Estatoees. What made the matter worse, one of these stragglers was the ill-fated warrior who had been chosen to carry the badge of his tribe; and there, high above their heads—the heads of the Brown Vipers—floated that detestable symbol, the green bird itself.

"There was no standing that. The Brown Vipers, as if with a common instinct, were immediately up in arms. They grappled the offending stragglers without gloves. They tore the green bird from the pole, stamped it under foot, smothered it in the mud, and pulling out the cone-tuft of its head, utterly degraded it in their own as well as in the estimation of the Estatoees. Not content with this, they hung the desecrated emblem about the neck of the bearer of it, and, spite of all their struggles, binding the arms of the two stragglers behind their backs, the relentless Vipers thrust the long pole which had borne the bird, in such a manner between their alternate arms as effectually to fasten them together. In this manner, amidst taunts, blows and revilings, they were left in the valley to get on as they might, while their enemies, insolent enough with exultation, proceeded to join the rest of their party.

CHAPTER VI.

"An hundred canoes were ready on the banks of the river Sarratay, for the conveyance to the opposite shore of the assembled Cherokees. And down they came, warrior after warrior, tribe after tribe, emblem after emblem, descending from the crags around, in various order, and hurrying all with shouts, and whoops and songs, grotesquely leaping to the river's bank, like so many boys just let out of school. Hilarity is, indeed, the life of nature! Civilization refines the one at the expense of the other, and then it is that no human luxury or sport, as known in society, stimulates appetite for any length of time. We can only laugh in the woods—society suffers but a smile, and desperate sanctity, with the countenance of a crow, frowns even at that.

"But, down, around, and gathering from every side, they came—the tens and the twenties of the several tribes of Cherokee. Grouped along the banks of the river, were the boats assigned to each. Some, already filled, were sporting in every direction over the clear bosom of that beautiful water. Moitoy himself, at the head of the tribe of Nequassée, from which he came, had already embarked; while the venerable Attakulla, with Jocassée, the gentle, sat upon a little bank in the neighbourhood of the Occony boats, awaiting the arrival of Cheochee and his party. And why came they not? One after another of the several tribes had filled their boats, and were either on the river or across it. But two clusters of canoes yet remained, and they were those of the rival tribes—a green bird flaunted over the one, and a brown viper, in many folds, was twined about the pole of the other.

"There was sufficient reason why they came not. The strife had begun;—for, when, gathering his thirteen warriors in a little hollow at the termination of the valley through which they came, Nagoochie beheld the slow and painful approach of the two stragglers upon whom the Occonies had so practised—when he saw the green bird, the beautiful emblem of his tribe, disfigured and

defiled—there was no longer any measure or method in his madness. There was no longer a thought of Jocassée to keep him back; and the feeling of ferocious indignation which filled his bosom was the common feeling with his brother warriors. They lay in wait for the coming of the Occonies, down at the foot of the Yellow Hill, where the woods gathered green and thick. They were few—but half in number of their enemies—but they were strong in ardour, strong in justice, and even death was preferable to a longer endurance of that dishonour to which they had already been too long subjected. They beheld the approach of the Brown Vipers, as, one by one, they wound out from the gap of the mountain, with a fierce satisfaction. The two parties were now in sight of each other, and could not mistake the terms of their encounter. No word was spoken between them, but each began the scalp-song of his tribe, preparing at the same time his weapon, and advancing to the struggle.

"'The green bird has a bill,' sang the Estatoees; 'and he flies like an arrow to his prey.'

"'The brown viper has poison and a fang,' responded the Occonies; 'and he lies under the bush for his enemy.'

"'Give me to clutch the war-tuft,' cried the leaders of each party, almost in the same breath.

"'To taste the blood,' cried another.

"'And make my knife laugh in the heart that shrinks,' sung another and another.

"'I will put my foot on the heart,' cried an Occony.

"'I tear away the scalp,' shouted an Estato, in reply; while a joint chorus from the two parties, promised—

"'A dog that runs, to the black spirit that keeps in the dark.'

"'*Echa-herro, echa-herro, echa-herro,*' was the grand cry, or fearful warwhoop, which announced the moment of onset and the beginning of the strife.

"The Occonies were not backward, though the affair was commenced by the Estatoees. Cheochee, their leader, was quite as brave as malignant, and now exulted in the near prospect of that sweet revenge, for all the supposed wrongs and more certain rivalries which his tribe had suffered from the Green Birds. Nor *was this* more the feeling with him than with his tribe. Disposing

themselves, therefore, in readiness to receive the assault, they rejoiced in the coming of a strife, in which, having many injuries to redress, they had the advantages, at the same time, of position and numbers.

"But their fighting at disadvantage was not now a thought with the Little Estatoees. Their blood was up, and like all usually patient people, once aroused, they were not so readily quieted. Nagoochie, the warrior now, and no longer the lover, led on the attack. You should have seen how that brave young chief went into battle—how he leapt up in air, slapped his hands upon his thighs in token of contempt for his foe, and throwing himself open before his enemies, dashed down his bow and arrows, and waving his hatchet, signified to them his desire for the conflict, *à l'outrance*, and, which would certainly make it so, hand to hand. The Occonies took him at his word, and throwing aside the long bow, they bounded out from their cover to meet their adversaries. Then should you have seen that meeting—that first rush—how they threw the tomahawk—how they flourished the knife—how the brave man rushed to the fierce embrace of his strong enemy—and how the two rolled along the hill in the teeth-binding struggle of death.

"The tomahawk of Nagoochie had wings and a tooth. It flew and bit in every direction. One after another, the Occonies went down before it, and still his fierce war cry of '*Echa-mal-Occony*,' preceding every stroke, announced another and another victim. They sank away from him like sheep before the wolf that is hungry, and the disparity of force was not so great in favour of the Occonies, when we recollect that Nagoochie was against them. The parties, under his fierce valour, were soon almost equal in number, and something more was necessary to be done by the Occonies before they could hope for that favourable result from the struggle which they had before looked upon as certain. It was for Cheochee now to seek out and to encounter the gallant young chief of Estato. Nagoochie, hitherto, for reasons best known to himself, had studiously avoided the leader of the Vipers; but he could no longer do so. He was contending, in close strife, with Okonettee, or the One-Eyed—a stout warrior of the Vipers—as Cheochee approached him. In the next moment,

the hatchet of Nagoochie entered the skull of Okonettee. The One-Eyed sunk to the ground, as if in supplication, and, seizing the legs of his conqueror, in spite of the repeated blows which descended from the deadly instrument, each of which was a death, while his head swam, and the blood filled his eyes, and his senses were fast fleeting, he held on with a death-grasp which nothing could compel him to forego. In this predicament, Cheochee confronted the young brave of Estato. The strife was short, for though Nagoochie fought as bravely as ever, yet he struck in vain, while the dying wretch, grappling his legs, disordered, by his convulsions, not less than by his efforts, every blow which the strong hand of Nagoochie sought to give. One arm was already disabled, and still the dying wretch held on to his legs. In another moment, the One-Eyed was seized by the last spasms of death, and in his struggles, he dragged the Estato chief to his knees. This was the fatal disadvantage. Before any of the Green Bird warriors could come to his succour, the blow was given, and Nagoochie lay under the knee of the Brown Viper. The knife was in his heart, and the life not yet gone, when the same instrument encircled his head, and his swimming vision could behold his own scalp waving in the grasp of his conqueror. The gallant spirit of Nagoochie passed away in a vain effort to utter his song of death—the song of a brave warrior conscious of many victories.

"Jocassée looked up to the hills when she heard the fierce cry of the descending Vipers. Their joy was madness, for they had fought with—they had slain, the bravest of their enemies. The intoxication of tone which Cheochee exhibited, when he told the story of the strife, and announced his victory, went like a death-stroke to the heart of the maiden. But she said not a word—she uttered no complaint—she shed no tear. Gliding quietly into the boat in which they were about to cross the river, she sat silent, gazing, with the fixedness of a marble statue, upon the still dripping scalp of her lover, as it dangled about the neck of his conqueror. On a sudden, just as they had reached the middle of the stream, she started, and her gaze was turned once more backward

upon the banks they had left, as if, on a sudden, some object of interest had met her sight,—then, whether by accident or design, with look still intent in the same direction, she fell over the side, before they could save or prevent her, and was buried in the deep waters of Sarratay for ever. She rose not once to the surface. The stream, from that moment, lost the name of Sarratay, and both whites and Indians, to this day, know it only as the river of Jocassée. The girls of Cherokee, however, contend that she did not sink, but walking 'the waters like a thing of life,' that she rejoined Nagoochie, whom she saw beckoning to her from the shore. Nor is this the only tradition. The story goes on to describe a beautiful lodge, one of the most select in the valleys of Manneyto, the hunter of which is Nagoochie of the Green Bird, while the maiden who dresses his venison is certainly known as Jocassée."

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